

STARS AND STRIPES[®]



**Army hopes to
save marriages
with seminars**
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**Sports in '04:
Red Sox part
of banner year**
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Sox's Johnny Damon, right, and Doug Mientkiewicz

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U.S. troops kill 25 insurgents in Mosul

Battle rages after rebels try to drive explosives into post Page 3

Calm moment in the midst of a storm



Fierce fighting in Iraq, a stabilization operation in Haiti, more questions on armor, force protection. The military endures a grueling 2004.

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**To our readers:
Stars and Stripes
will not be
published on
New Year's Day.
Look for it again
on Jan. 2, 2005.**

U.S. Army Sgt. Mark Cox of the 101st Airborne Division and his wife, Dawn, from Crawfordsville, Ind., laugh as they hug inside a hangar after Cox returned to Fort Campbell, Ky., from Iraq, on Jan. 7.

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Command
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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Schiavo right-to-die case: A Tampa, Fla., appeals court Wednesday denied a request from the parents of a severely brain-damaged woman for a new trial in the long-running right-to-die case, according to the court clerk's office.

The 2nd District Court of Appeal issued the denial without a written opinion.

Attorney George Felos said once the court issues a formal decision in 15 days, Michael Schiavo may again be able to order the removal of the feeding tube that helps keep his 41-year-old wife alive.

Terri Schiavo collapsed from a chemical imbalance due to an eating disorder 14 years ago and left no written end-of-life directive.

Hospital in crisis: The Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Medical Center of Los Angeles failed an inspection by federal regulators this week, moving the beleaguered public hospital closer to losing \$200 million in federal funding.

Barring a last-minute change, the Los Angeles County-owned hospital just south of Watts is tentatively slated to lose its federal money Jan. 19, county health officials wrote in a memo late Wednesday to the county Board of Supervisors. Without that funding, King/Drew could be forced to close, imperiling the largely poor black and Hispanic population it serves, officials have said.

King/Drew had pledged to make changes earlier this month after the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services faulted it for allowing county police officers to use Taser stun guns to subdue psychiatric patients.

Alabama Ten Commandments case: Former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore acknowledges having feelings of "doubt and fear" on the night of July 31, 2001, as he sat alone in his state courthouse awaiting delivery of a Ten Commandments monument he wanted to install in the rotunda.

In a new book, "So Help Me God," Moore describes that night as the completion of a life-long mission to use his position as the state's

highest judge to publicly display a symbol of his religion.

It was also the beginning of a two-year fight that ended with Moore becoming the first chief justice in Alabama's history to be expelled from office after he refused a federal judge's order to remove the monument from the judicial building's rotunda.

World

Civil war in Sudan: Sudanese government and southern rebel officials were to sign a permanent cease-fire deal and endorse a detailed plan on how they would implement an agreement to end a 21-year civil war in southern Sudan, the Kenyan foreign ministry said Thursday.

The north-south war has pitted Sudan's Islamic-dominated government against rebels seeking greater autonomy and a greater share of the country's wealth for the Christian and animist south.

The conflict is blamed for more than 2 million deaths, primarily from war-induced famine and disease.

Berlusconi's hair: Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi acknowledged Thursday that he had a hair transplant, saying his hair is "growing wonderfully" and that cosmetic surgery is a duty for those who can afford it. Italian media in August reported that Berlusconi was speculating that the image-conscious, bald-



Wash. governor's race: Republican gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi calls for a revote in the hotly contested Washington state governor's race at his campaign headquarters in Bellevue. Joining Rossi are, from left, his wife, Terry, and children Juliana, 14; Joseph, 8; Jake, 10; and Jillian, 4. Democrat Christine Gregoire was declared governor-elect Thursday — by 129 votes over Rossi — but Rossi has refused to concede. Secretary of State Sam Reed, a Republican, certified Gregoire as the winner of the closest governor's race in state history.



Berlusconi
2003



Berlusconi
Dec. 28, 2004

ling leader might have had a hair transplant. "My hair is growing wonderfully," Berlusconi said during his year-end press conference. "I am very happy to have subjected myself to such pain."

Berlusconi, 68, had cosmetic surgery around his eyes during the Christmas holidays last year. He confirmed the operation about a month later, specifying that it had only been around his eyes.

Gay marriage in Spain: Spain's Socialist government on Friday approved a bill to legalize same-sex marriages, putting this predominantly Roman Catholic country on course to become only the third country to recognize gay marriages.

The bill was approved at a Cabinet meeting and is expected to be presented to Parliament in February for debate.

"The right to marry is a right for everyone, without distinction. It cannot be understood as a privilege," Deputy Prime Minister Maria Teresa Fernandez de la Vega told a press conference after the Cabinet meeting.

Under the bill, homosexuals will be allowed to adopt children and couples of the same sex will be able to inherit from one another as well as receive retirement benefits from their working spouses in the same way in which heterosexual married couples do now.

Israeli barrier: A section of Israel's West Bank separation barrier will leave 17,000 Palestinians on the Israeli side, hampering their access to the West Bank, settler and security officials said Thursday.

The barrier will encompass the Etzion settlement bloc in the southern West Bank, as originally planned — despite a Supreme Court ruling to move the route closer to the "Green Line" 1949 border, said Shaul Goldstein, the Etzion bloc council head.

A senior security official with the Defense Ministry was in talks with the attorney gen-

eral to try to reduce hardship to the Palestinians.

Israel began building the obstacle to stop a wave of Palestinian suicide bombers who were infiltrating unhindered from the West Bank.

Russian school attack: Only 17 of 31 attackers who seized a school in southern Russia four months ago have been identified, Deputy Prosecutor General Nikolai Shepel said Thursday.

He said that documents had been sent to Interpol to help identify two of the attackers, "presumably coming from Middle East countries," the Interfax news agency reported.

The Sept. 1-3 terrorist raid on a school in the town of Beslan ended in a hail of gunfire and explosions, killing more than 330 hostages, nearly half of them children.

Uganda cease-fire deal: Ugandan officials and rebel commanders are negotiating the terms of a cease-fire deal that is expected to open the way to political talks on ending an 18-year civil war in which thousands have been killed and more than a million forced from their homes, the chief mediator said Thursday.

Government representatives and commanders of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army are defining the duration of the proposed cease-fire and the area in northern Uganda that would be covered by the truce, Betty Bigombe said.

Afghan prisoners: Fifteen prisoners escaped from an Afghan jail, apparently with the help of several of their guards, police said Thursday.

The group disappeared from a jail in Khost, a former stronghold of Taliban and al-Qaida militants near the Pakistani border — but all those who escaped were criminals rather than "political prisoners," said police chief Mohammed Ayoub.

Three were quickly re-arrested, but the others were still at large Thursday.

Ukraine election: Ukraine's election commission rejected the entire appeal by Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich against results showing he lost this week's repeat runoffs, saying he had not proved there were any mass violations, a commission member said.

Yanukovich now has the option of appealing to the Supreme Court.

The prime minister has refused to accept results showing a solid victory for Western-leaning opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko in Sunday's vote.

Stories and photos from wire services

25 insurgents killed in assault on U.S. post

BY SLOBODAN LEKIC
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Insurgents tried to ram a truck with half a ton of explosives into a U.S. military post in the northern city of Mosul on Thursday, then ambushed reinforcements in a huge gunbattle in which 25 rebels and one American soldier were killed. Warplanes fired missiles and strafed gunmen during the fight.

The assault on the outpost, which U.S. soldiers finally repulsed, appeared to be better coordinated than past attacks, with guerrillas apparently pulling out their strongest assaults in an effort to derail Jan. 30 elections, U.S. military spokesman Lt. Col. Paul Hastings said.

"The terrorists are growing more desperate in their attempts to derail the elections, and they're trying to put it all on the line and give it all they can," Hastings said.

Mosul, Iraq's third-largest city, has become a hotbed of insurgent activity in the past several months. A suicide bomber infiltrated a U.S. base in the city last week, detonating his explosives in a dining tent and killing 22 people, including 18 Americans. The radical Ansar al-Sunnah Army claimed responsibility for the attack.

Wednesday's clashes began



An Iraqi boy looks out from the rubble of the building destroyed the day before in Mosul on Thursday. U.S. troops and warplanes killed at least 25 insurgents as they attacked an American outpost in northern Iraq with a car bomb and explosives. One American soldier died in the ambush.

when a truck approached the base, and American troops opened fire. The truck, laden with 1,000 pounds of explosives, blew

up just outside, Hastings said.

Reinforcements came under fire by guerrillas using automatic weapons and rocket-propelled

grenades and moving in squads of between 10 and 12. A heavily armored Stryker vehicle that had left the outpost moments before

the truck bomb came across seven roadside bombs that had been laid out for its return, Hastings said. The bombs were detonated safely.

The Americans then called in strikes by F-18 and F-16 fighter jets, which launched three Maverick missiles and conducted several strafing runs against the insurgents. The result was 25 insurgents and one American soldier killed. Twenty Americans were wounded, but 17 returned to duty within hours.

Insurgents have shown an increasing sophistication in their attacks. In Baghdad on Wednesday, guerrillas used an anonymous tip to lure Iraqi police and national guards to a house in a staunchly Baathist neighborhood. They then set off a massive explosion in the house, killing 22 civilians and seven officers.

The latest clash in Mosul came as U.S. troops launched a new offensive in an area south of the capital dubbed the "triangle of death," in an apparent effort to secure the region ahead of the crucial parliamentary election on Jan. 30.

Brig. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, assistant commander of the 1st Cavalry Division that controls Baghdad, said Wednesday that U.S. troops were focusing on areas around Mahmodiyah, a town about 25 miles south of the capital.

Army tries to repair marriages

BY KIMBERLY HEFLING
The Associated Press

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky. — When Sgt. Jose Bermudez returned from Iraq early this year, he came home to a new baby and a troubled marriage.

"We were on the brink of divorce," Mandy Bermudez acknowledged as the couple ate lunch recently with their three children, all under age 3.

The Bermudezes were among 300 couples with the Fort Campbell-based 101st Airborne Division who have attended "marriage enrichment" seminars put on by the Army in hopes of saving war-ravaged relationships.

With studies showing divorce rates as high as about 20 percent over two years among couples whose one spouse has been sent off to war, the Army is spending \$2 million on a variety of marriage programs, including vouchers for romantic getaways to places like the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn.

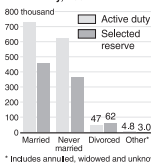
"I've been in the Army 20 years, and I've never seen this Army pay for programs like this," said Lt. Col. Chester Egert, chaplain for the 101st.

One program being implemented Armywide teaches couples forgiveness and the skills to communicate. It includes a 40-hour course with lessons on the dan-

Marriages hurt in times of war

With studies showing divorce rates as high as 21 percent among couples where one spouse has been sent off to war, the Army is spending \$2 million on a variety of marriage programs.

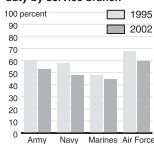
Marital status of the military, 2002



* Includes annulled, widowed and unknown

Sources: Military Family Resource Center

Percentage of married active duty by service branch



Sources: Military Family Resource Center

gers of alcohol and tobacco and how to recognize post-traumatic stress. Soldiers who complete it are rewarded with promotion points and a weekend retreat with their spouse.

"If you learn those skills, you can make an impact on the number of divorces, and the number, we think, of reports of physical violence," said Col. Glen Bloomstrom, director of ministry initiatives for the Chief of Chaplains.

To make the program more desirable, commanders are encouraged to give their soldiers time off to attend. Baby-sitting is often provided.

"What we're trying to do is change the culture, that it's OK to work on your marriage and take some time, and invest in your lifelong relationship — especially now when we're asking so much of our military spouses," Bloomstrom said.

José Bermudez said it seems as if everyone he knows at Fort Campbell is either getting a divorce or contemplating one. Many couples want to get things decided because the division has been alerted it could return to Iraq as early as mid-2005.

At Fort Campbell and elsewhere, many couples got married right before one spouse left for Iraq. Others, like the Bermudezes, have been married longer but still have spent little time together.

Mandy Bermudez said part of the problem with their marriage was that he had trouble adjusting to the routine she had established for herself while he was in Iraq.

She said the two joined a church, and "it turned our marriage around." He and his wife decided to stay together.

"It's worth it to try and work it out," José Bermudez said.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Wednesday, at least 1,325 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,041 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is one lower than the Defense Department's tally, it's not unusual for the figures to differ slightly from day to day.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,187 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 932 deaths resulting from

hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A servicemember died Tuesday in a non-hostile incident in Iraq's Anbar province.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ Navy Seaman Pablo Pena Briones Jr., 22, Anaheim, Calif.; died Tuesday of a non-hostile gunshot wound in Fallujah, Iraq, assigned to 1st Marine Division Detachment, Naval Medical Center San Diego.

■ Army Spc Jose A. Rivera-Serrano, 26, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico; killed Monday by an explosive in Baghdad, Iraq; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Hood, Texas.

■ Marine Staff Sgt. Jason A. Lehto, 31, Mount Clemens, Mich.; died Tuesday in a non-hostile incident in Iraq's Anbar province; assigned to Marine Forces Reserve Marine Wing Support Group 47, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, Mount Clemens, Mich.

Militants warn voters

BAGHDAD — Three Iraqi militant groups issued a joint statement Thursday warning Iraqis not to take part in the upcoming elections and condemning democracy as "un-Islamic."

The statement, posted on the Web site of the Ansar al-Sunnah Army, told Iraqis not to be part of "the force of democracy and elections."

The statement, signed by Ansar

al-Sunnah Army, the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Mujahideen Army, said that democracy could lead to passing un-Islamic laws, such as permitting homosexuality, if the majority agrees to it.

On Wednesday, the Ansar al-Sunnah Army issued a statement warning it will target all those who take part in the elections. The group described polling stations as "centers of atheism."

From The Associated Press

National Guard: Jacks of all trades in Iraq

Many Guard soldiers' tasks are far cry from their civilian jobs

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO

Stars and Stripes

TAJI, Iraq—Spc. Gary Trabuscio lies prone on the M88 recovery vehicle, tinkering with the engine of the monstrous tracked machine.

In the National Guard, the 24-year-old is a vehicle mechanic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, at home in Staten Island, Trabuscio is a cop with the New York Police Department's school safety division.

What do those jobs have in common?

"Nothing at all," he says with a laugh.

Back home, Spc. Paul Dwyer, a 25-year-old from Lynbrook, N.Y., scans documents into computers for a law firm. In Iraq, he's also a mechanic with the 1st of the 69th.

"That's why I joined the Guard, to learn how to work on all kinds of vehicles," Dwyer says.

As the third wave of U.S. troops arrives in Iraq, their numbers include more National Guard and Reserve units than ever. And for the citizen-soldiers, their civilian jobs may have something, or nothing, to do with their military specialty.

Consider, for example, these soldiers and their tasks: Spc. Joshua Squire, 22, Crowley, La., mortar platoon; student, Sgt. Shelley Landry, 29, Lafayette, La., general's staff; occupational health tester, Staff Sgt. Robert Burns, 36, New Berne, La., infantry; sheriff's deputy, Pfc. Ronald Boudreaux, 20, Gramercy, La., artillery; construction.

National Guard units have always been activated for a variety of tasks. Since 1969, for example, the 1st of the 69th from New York City has been called up for a postal strike, a state prison guard strike, in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, and now for service in Iraq.

The 256th Brigade Combat Team, a National Guard unit from Louisiana, was activated during the last war with Iraq but did not deploy. This time, they were activated, sent to Fort Hood, Texas, and the National Training Center in California, and now operate in an area north and west of Baghdad, falling under command of the 1st Cavalry Division.

National Guard units currently make up nearly 40 percent of the 150,000 U.S. troops in and around Iraq, officials say.

There have been 100,000



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

Above: Spc. Paul Dwyer, right, and Spc. Gary Trabuscio, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, work on an M88 recovery vehicle dubbed "The Deacon" in Taji, Iraq. **Neither Dwyer or Trabuscio are mechanics in the civilian world, but both have that military specialty in the National Guard.**
Right: Sgt. Joseph Shanks, 25, of Baker, La., is a Humvee gunner with the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, a National Guard unit. **Back home, he works for the Georgia Pacific paper company.**

Guard soldiers activated in the United States or overseas at any given time since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, officials said. On Wednesday, the Pentagon said the total number of Army National Guard and Army Reserve on active duty is 159,972.

Sgt. Javish Rosa, 25, New York City, infantry; previous active-duty Army. Cpl. Lou Olander, 21, New York, N.Y., medic; residential building dormitory. Staff Sgt. Feliberto Rivero, 47, Bronx, N.Y., infantry; school maintenance worker. Sgt. Wayne Rabinowitz, 57, New York, N.Y., unit clerk; full-time National Guard.

Back home on Long Island, Lt. Col. Geoff Slack runs a third-generation tree-trimming business, as he calls it. More technically,

he jokes, he can be called an arborist.

In Iraq, he commands the 1st of the 69th, and goes into the field so often that he has two personal security teams which work on shifts. Slack has quickly gained a reputation among his soldiers as a driven man who expects a lot from his men, but who gives the same in return. Some who haven't known him for long thought he was a cop or firefighter

in his civilian life.

One of the great things about the Guard, Slack says, is how long many of the soldiers in the unit have known one another. He's known some of his soldiers and their families for nearly two decades. But that closeness can have a downside.

The Fighting 69th, a nickname the battalion earned in the Civil War, has suffered three deaths since arriving in Iraq. Another six soldiers have been wounded so badly they will not return to service.

"It hits you hard. Very hard," Slack says. "When we get back to New York, I need to be able to look those families in the eye and tell them their loved ones something."

Sgt. Donald Pinkston, 34, Greenwood, Miss., infantry; State Department Diplomatic Security Service. Sgt. Luis Villegas, 23, New York, N.Y., infantry; college student. Capt. Martin Ortiz, 45, Los Angeles, Calif., medic; pediatrician. Spc. Jason Garcia, 24, New York, N.Y., legal clerk/public affairs; hip-hop music industry.

Sgt. Brad Domingue, a 26-year-old from Carencro, La., serves as a medic with the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment. For the past six years, he has worked as an emergency medical technician on an ambulance crew.

His military job dovetails perfectly with his civilian occupation, sometimes in surprising ways. A few weeks back, during a raid on a compound near Bagh-



dad, Domingue was working with troops keeping security around the target.

As U.S. troops tried to overcome language barriers and allow some local traffic to pass through the area, Domingue's medical training came into play. He checked the medication and heart-monitor readout of one man in the car, determining that he had a serious medical condition and was on the way to the hospital. The car was allowed through; its occupants profusely thanked the soldiers.

When he gets back home from Iraq, Domingue said, he's thinking of starting his own private ambulance company with one of his former co-workers.

Spc. Derrick Jefferson, 25, Boyce, La., water purification; security guard. Master Sgt. Rudy Brown, 56, New Orleans, logistics; state food services adviser. Sgt. Chris Blanchard, 24, Broussard, La., supply; wireless phone sales. Sgt. 1st Class Mary Magee, 37, Alexandria, La., personnel services noncommissioned officer; full-time National Guard.

Maj. Lee Wright, 41, of Crowley, La., serves as the 256th Brigade's information operations of-

ficer. As he describes it, his job is to synchronize and coordinate the messages of the psychological operations, public affairs and civil affairs teams.

"It's kind of like being an orchestra conductor," he says. In his civilian life, Wright is a food chemist for a company that produces additive blends for sports nutrition products and other consumables. His job has come into play in Iraq in a few surprising ways.

Within the 256th's area of operations, he said, is a pharmaceutical plant the locals are trying to get working again. Back home, Wright was doing research-and-development work with the type of equipment being used at the plant in Iraq. His experience also helps in the largely agricultural area where the brigade is operating.

"In our business back home, we have extensive interactions with the rice, wheat and corn industries, from the basic level through processing," Wright said. "This being a predominantly agricultural area, I've already started using that."

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MILITARY UPDATE

Tom Philpott

Language trumps intent

Some disabled reservists still won't benefit from '05 NDAA

When legislative language misfires, Congress can intend one thing and do another. That seems to have occurred last October with passage of the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act.

The NDAA adopts a fairer formula for calculating disability retirement for activated National Guard and Reserve personnel.

However, the initiative to benefit mobilized reservists, at least for now, is written in a way that helps far fewer members than lawmakers hoped. In fact, it leaves behind most Guard and Reserve members who have been seriously wounded in war.

National Guard and Reserve personnel injured while on active duty, and awarded disability retirement on or after Oct. 28, 2004, will have their pay calculated using a more generous formula.

The change was proposed by Defense officials after seeing a disturbing disparity in disability retirement between active-duty members and activated reservists injured in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The problem is linked to the "High-3" retirement formula that applies to any member who entered service on or after Sept. 8, 1980. Those who joined earlier, and who serve 20 years, see their annuity based on a percentage of "final" basic pay. Retirees under High-3 see annuities based on a percentage of average basic pay over their highest three earning years, usually their last three years of active service.

But three years' active service for a mobilized Guard and Reserve member, to calculate disability retirement, can mean going back to period of service when basic pay was set far below current pay levels.

This can sharply lower the value of disability retirement compared to active-duty colleagues. Indeed, older, more experienced reservists wounded in Iraq can receive disability pay only half the size of that provided to injured active-duty peers.

With the NDAA, Congress stepped in to require that disability retirements be computed for High-3 Guard or Reserve members as though they had served their last three years on active duty. But the law wasn't written, officials discovered, so it could be applied retroactively to reserve members injured since the war on terrorism began Sept. 11, 2001.

Knowing that was the intent, Defense lawyers and policymakers reviewed the language carefully over the last two months. They found no way to interpret it more broadly. In late December, officials issued guidance to military finance centers to apply the more favorable High-3 formula only to disability retirements on or after Oct. 28, when the law was signed.

It's too early to assure disabled reservists that the new Congress will vote to move the effective date back to 9/11. But it clearly is out of sync as written with another 2005 NDAA change, this one directing that the more favorable High-3 formula be used to recalculate survivor benefit to families of reservists who died on active after September 10, 2001.

The SBP change helps only a small number of survivors. Most elect to forfeit SBP anyway to accept tax-free dependency and Indemnity Compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs. It will make a difference to families with small children who had lost reservists on active duty on or after Nov. 24, 2003.

To comment, write Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centerville, VA 20129-1111. E-mail mlupdate@aol.com or visit www.militaryupdate.com

Crew Chief for a Day program



JOHN SMITH/U.S. Air Force

Staff Sgt. Gerald Gootee, right, a crew chief for the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, shows Col. Derrick A. Hoxie III, from the 552nd Air Control Wing, how to confirm to the pilot that the flight controls are working properly during an A-10 preflight check at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. The demonstration was part of the squadron's Crew Chief for a Day program, which offers deployed airmen of all Air Force career fields the opportunity to see what it is like to work on fighter jets.

DOD budget cut plan

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon plans to retire one of the Navy's 12 aircraft carriers and buy fewer amphibious landing ships for the Marine Corps as part of \$60 billion in proposed cuts over the next six years, congressional and military officials told The New York Times on Wednesday.

The proposed cuts would, for the first time since the Sept. 11,

2001, attacks, slow the growth in Pentagon spending, which has risen 41 percent in that period, to about \$420 billion this year.

Under the proposal, the Navy would retire the carrier John F. Kennedy next year.

In addition, development of the Army's \$120 billion Future Combat System, designed to link soldiers by computer with remotely piloted aircraft and combat vehicles, would be delayed.

From staff reports

Message for our men and women in uniform...

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Military dominates talk in election year

BY PATRICK DICKSON
AND LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The presidential election dominated the front pages around the world in 2004, but it was the military that drove much of the conversation surrounding the campaign.

Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry presented himself as a viable commander in chief by focusing on his experiences in the Vietnam War.

Debate over his war record quickly became the dominant topic in the campaign, with the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, a Texas-based Political Action Committee flooding the airwaves with counterclaims as to Kerry's exploits.

President George Bush already had en-

dured similar criticism, coming from filmmaker Michael Moore, who questioned the president's service in the Alabama National Guard with the firm "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Although at times Washington's favorite sport appeared to be forming pools to defend Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's designation date, Rumsfeld remains.

He was criticized for the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, what was widely perceived as inadequacies in postwar planning and his response to a question from a soldier in Kuwait in December about why his men were scouring for armor trucks bound for Iraq. Yet Rumsfeld stayed, while many other figures in the Bush Cabinet moved on after the elections.

The service chiefs were less bulletproof. Army guys dropped last year when Rumsfeld suggested that Air Force Secre-

tary James Roche should replace Thomas White as Army secretary, after White resigned in May 2003.

Roche was a former Naval officer with no Army experience. But his nomination stalled in the Senate Armed Services Committee, primarily because of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who criticized a \$21 billion air tanker leasing arrangement Roche supported.

Roche withdrew his name from consideration on Nov. 16, and the Senate quietly confirmed defense industry executive Francis J. Harvey as the new secretary of the Army.

Meanwhile, Navy Secretary Gordon England was mum on whether he intends to remain for a second Bush term.

But the war in Iraq was never far from the headlines, with death tolls in Iraq top-

ping 1,326 U.S. personnel by the end of the year, according to statistics compiled by the Pentagon. In 2004 alone, 942 service-members were killed, and thousands were injured, especially by improvised explosive devices and mortars.

Congress and other critics grilled the Pentagon about why more armored vehicles and personal protective gear had not been sent to the region.

In Afghanistan, another 50 U.S. service-members died in 2004, bringing the total in that war to 151 since it began in October 2001.

And though the Bush administration last year envisioned smaller troop numbers in Iraq by this time, the number is ramping up in preparation for January elections.

The success or failure of those elections will shape much of what happens to the military in 2005.

2004 year in review

January

Jan. 8: In Iraq, U.S. Black Hawk helicopter crashes in Nuaymya, near Fallujah, killing nine soldiers.

Jan. 9: U.S. Defense Department gives Saddam Hussein prisoner-of-war status, allowing the former Iraqi dictator access to Red Cross personnel.

Jan. 11: Former Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill tells "60 Minutes" that the Bush administration had been planning an attack against Iraq since the first days of the presidency.

Jan. 20: President Bush delivers his State of the Union address defending the war in Iraq, tax cuts and highlighting the urgency to continue fighting terrorism.

February

Feb. 2: The Bush administration releases its \$2.4 trillion budget proposal for fiscal 2005 that would boost military funding by 7.1 percent.

Feb. 12: Two former employees of Iraq contractor Halliburton say the company "routinely overcharged" the U.S. military.

Feb. 23: Army officials announce they will kill the \$38 billion Colson helicopter program.

Feb. 28: Under U.S. pressure, Haiti's president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, resigns and goes into exile. U.S. Marines begin to arrive in the country to help keep the peace.

March

March 18: NATO deploys an additional 1,000 peacekeepers to Kosovo to help the 18,000 already there, as violence threatens

to break out.

March 20: Oscars die in clashes between Serbs and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

March 29: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization formally admits seven new countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

March 31: Four U.S. civilian contract workers are shot, mutilated, and then dragged through the streets of Fallujah, Iraq, and their remains hung from a bridge.

April

April 5: U.S. troops reach Fallujah in response to the killing and mutilation of the four contractors.

April 11: U.S. commanders order a cease-fire in Fallujah after members of Iraq Governing Council resign in protest of the offensive.

April 14: In an audiotape broadcast, a man believed to be Osama bin Laden says his al-Qaida organization will declare a truce with nations that withdraw troops from Muslim nations.

April 19: U.S. officials say they will end the offensive in Fallujah if insurgents agree to surrender their weapons.

April 22: Army Spc. Pat Tillman, who left the National Football League to fight alongside his brother in the Army Rangers, is killed in Afghanistan. The Army says Tillman was killed by the enemy in a prolonged fight.

April 30: CBS's "60 Minutes II" broadcasts graphic photos, taken in late 2003, of American soldiers grinning as they abuse Iraqi in the Abu Ghraib prison.

April 30: U.S. Marines transfer security of Fallujah to Iraqi forces led by Asim Muhammad Salih, a former general and member of Sad-



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

Veterans and other visitors to Washington flocked to the National World War II Memorial in the days before its dedication on May 29.

dam Hussein's Republican Guard.

May

May 4: Defense Department officials announce 135,000 U.S. soldiers will remain in Iraq through 2005, even though an earlier plan said that number would be reduced to 115,000 by the end of May 2004.

May 5: Bush appears on Arab television to call abuse and deaths of Iraqi prisoners "abhorrent." Bush criticizes Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for not informing him about the photos earlier.

May 19: In the first court-martial in the prisoner abuse scandal in Iraq, Spc. Jeremy Stryer is found guilty of several charges.

May 20: U.S. troops and Iraqi confiscate computers and ransack headquarters of Ahmad Chalabi, a member of the Iraqi Governing Council who had been receiving a monthly stipend from the U.S. government.

May 26: The Islamic government and Saddam Hussein's Liberation Army agree to end civil war that has lasted more than 20 years and claimed about 2 million people. The fighting continues in the western Darfur region between Arab militias and black Africans.

May 28: Iyad Allawi, former exile and member of the Iraqi Governing Council, is chosen as Iraq's interim prime minister.

May 29: The new National World War II Memorial is dedicated in Washington, with almost 10,000 veterans of that war in attendance.

May 30: The Washington Post cites an

Army investigation report that says Spc. Pat Tillman was killed by friendly fire.

June

June 1: U.N. peacekeepers arrive in Haiti to begin taking over for the Marine-led multinational force.

June 2: The Army announces that troops heading for service in Iraq and Afghanistan take extended tours.

June 7: Pentagon officials announce plans to withdraw about 12,500 U.S. troops from South Korea.

June 23: Bush administration offers oil and a "provisional security guarantee" to North Korea if it agrees to disclose details of its weapons program, allow inspections and begin to dismantle its nuclear program.

June 24: North Korea threatens to test a nuclear weapon.

June 27: Iraq "Islamic Reaction" group threatens to behead Marine Col. Wassef Ali Hassan, an American of Lebanese descent, unless the U.S. releases all Iraqi prisoners. Hassan later turns up in his native Lebanon and is returned to U.S. custody.

June 28: Pentagon officials announce the call-up of 5,600 Infantry Ready Reserve soldiers for service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

July

July 1: Saddam Hussein appears in Iraq court for the first time to be arraigned on charges of crimes against humanity.

July 22: The U.S. Army inspector general continues the findings of Army Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, says Maj. Gen. Robert S. Johnson, that systemic problems, caused prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib.

Saddam

August

Aug. 5: Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr orders an uprising against coalition troops. Violence flares in Najaf and Baghdad; hundreds of Iraqis are killed.

Aug. 16: Bush announces that the Pentagon will withdraw 60,000 to 70,000 troops from Europe and Asia over the next 10 years.

Aug. 26: Al-Sadr agrees to deal brokered by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani to end the siege of Najaf and Kufa.

September

Sept. 7: The American death toll in Iraq reaches 1,000 troops.

Sept. 29: Judges in Yemen sentence Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri and Jamal al-Badawi to death for plotting the 2000 attack on the American destroyer USS Cole.

October

Oct. 1-3: In a battle that later will be held up as a model for the fight against al-Qaeda, more than 5,000 U.S. soldiers, assisted by newly trained Iraqi troops, take over Samarra from militants.

Oct. 9: Afghanistan holds elections. Despite allegations of fraud by some of the 17 other candidates on the ballot, Hamid Karzai is declared the winner.

Oct. 24: Fifty new graduates of a coalition-sponsored Iraq army training course are sworn in. The graduates are training loyal to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Oct. 25: The New York Times reports that about 380 tons of explosives disappeared from Iraq's al-Qasbi military installation sometime after the U.S.-led war began in 2003.

November

Nov. 8: U.S. forces initiate an all-out assault on Fallujah, which had been under the control of insurgents since May.

Nov. 16: Bush nominates his national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, as secretary of state. Rice's deputy, Stephen Hadley, is named to succeed Rice.

Nov. 30: The New York Times reports that International Committee of the Red Cross found military personnel used techniques on prisoners held at the Guantanamo prison in Cuba "harsh and torturous."

Nov. 30: Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge announces his resignation.

December

Dec. 8: A soldier in Kuwait asks Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld why his unit's Humvees and other transport vehicles aren't equipped with protective armor, prompting question from Congress and the media as to why, after two years of war, only 75 percent of all transport vehicles in the Middle East theater are armored.

Dec. 21: Twenty-two people, including 14 U.S. troops, were killed and 69 persons wounded in an attack on a dining facility at a U.S. base in Mosul.

Dec. 21: Col. Hassan begins his Article 32 pretrial investigation at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Hassan is charged with desertion after he disappeared from his unit in Iraq and later claimed to be kidnapped.

Dec. 27: Pacific Command dispatches ships, aircraft and 3,700 troops to aid in disaster relief efforts for victims of the earthquake and tsunami catastrophe in the Indian Ocean.

Compiled by Lisa Burgess, Stars and Stripes

Sources: www.infolapse.com; Stars and Stripes news stories.

Army Spc. Lyndine England, of the 372nd Military Police Company, became the face of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal in Iraq.

THE WASHINGTON POST/AP

IN THE WORLD

WHO: Up to 5M lacking survival basics

Death toll tops 117,000 in Asia; survivors fight disease, crocodiles

BY CHRIS BRUMMITT

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Up to 5 million people around the tsunami-struck Indian Ocean region do not have access to the basics they need to stay alive — clean water, shelter, food, sanitation and health care, the U.N. World Health Organization said, saying it needed \$40 million dollars to get those supplies to victims.

The death toll from last week-end's earthquake-tsunami catastrophe rose to more than 117,000 Thursday as Indonesia uncovered more and more dead from ravaged Sumatra island, where pilots dropped food to remote villages still unreachable by rescue workers. A false alarm that new killer waves were about to hit sparked panic in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The increase in the death toll came after Indonesia reported nearly 28,000 newly confirmed dead in Sumatra, which was closest to the earthquake's epicenter and was overwhelmed by the tsunami that followed. Some 60 percent of Banda Aceh, the main city in northern Sumatra, was destroyed, the U.N. children's agency estimated, and 115 miles of the island's northwest coast — lined with villages — was inundated.

Another zone where officials have hardly begun to get a sense of the human cost was India's remote Andaman and Nicobar islands, just northwest of Sumatra, where entire villages were wiped out. The region's administrator said Thursday that 10,000 people were missing.

Survivors who reached the archipelago's main city, Port Blair, said they had not eaten for two days and people had to contend with hungry crocodiles that were washed ashore. "Two or three crocodiles started coming toward us," said Sister Charity, a 32-year-old nun, describing her rescue from a small island by the navy. "The navy officers had to

fire their revolvers to ward off the crocodiles."

International governments have so far donated some \$500 million for victims of the disaster, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said.

Indonesia, with around 80,000 dead, was the worst hit, followed by Sri Lanka with 27,200. India with more than 7,300 and Thailand at 2,400. The total across 11 nations in southern Asia and East Africa was likely to rise, with thousands still missing and fears that disease could bring a new wave of deaths.

Tens of thousands of residents fled coasts in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand after warnings that a new tsunami was about to strike after new aftershocks hit the Indian Ocean Thursday.

India issued a tsunami warning at midday, but then hours later its science minister, Kapil Sibal, went on television to announce the warning was incorrect and based on information received from a U.S. research firm.

Several aftershocks were recorded in the Indian Ocean, but experts said they were not strong enough to spark a tsunami.

Meanwhile, military ships and planes rushed to get desperately needed aid to Sumatra's ravaged coast.

Food drops began along the coast, mostly of instant noodles and medicines, with some of the areas "hard to reach because they are surrounded by cliffs," said Budi Adituro, head of the government's relief team.

Government institutions in Aceh province, on Sumatra's northern tip, have ceased to function and basic supplies such as fuel have almost run out. But even as hope for the missing dwindled, survivors continued to turn up.

In Sri Lanka, a lone fisherman named Sini Mohammed Sarfudeen was rescued Wednesday by an air force helicopter crew after clinging to his wave-tossed boat for three days.



Silvarani, a tsunami victim, cries after seeing her damaged house Thursday at a fishermen's colony at Nagappattinam, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

AP photos

Magnitude makes death toll hard to tabulate

BY S. SRINIVASAN

The Associated Press

CUDDALORE, India — Armies of officials are tabulating the deaths caused by the tsunami that struck a dozen countries in Asia and Africa last weekend. The grim task is often imprecise.

There is meticulous record keeping in many areas of India, but bulldozers push bodies into mass graves in other places in Asia, forcing officials to make guesstimates.

"You are dealing with a lot of imperfections," said Steve Hollingsworth, director of India's branch of the international aid group CARE. "People are dealing with a chaotic situation."

So far, the death toll across 11 nations has exceeded 117,000.

In India, a network of bureaucratic foot soldiers — local health, police and revenue officials — are recording every death in five-column registers resembling school notebooks: one column each for the victim's name, age, parents' names, address and two identification marks. A photograph is taken of each body.

Sri Lanka follows a similar pro-



A motorist covers his nose to avoid the stench of a corpse Thursday in Banda Aceh, Aceh province, Indonesia.

cess, although the military, police, the National Disaster Management Center and government ministers give different death tolls.

When asked whether the government could coordinate efforts to come up with one figure, the center's director, Nimal Hettiarachi, snapped, "Sorry, don't

ask me this question."

In Indonesia, officials swamped by the vast numbers admit they have been forced to make crude estimates, such as by taking the number of bodies in one mass grave and multiplying it by the number of graves. In other cases, they estimate the population of a village, count the survivors and assume the rest have been killed.

"At first, we counted the bodies during the evacuation, but later, when we found there were too many others, then we became confused," said Irmam Rachman, a volunteer with the Indonesian Red Cross.

"Therefore, we only based our estimation on the number of corpses buried in the mass graves — one for about 400 corpses."

On Wednesday, officials in Indonesia's Aceh province bulldozed hundreds of bodies into pits.

No photos were taken, and no details were recorded.

"We have to do this because of the smell and the health concern.

We're facing a major health hazard and we leave them lying around," acting Aceh Gov. Azwar Abu Bakar said. "We have no refrigerators to keep these bodies."



Refugees line up at a makeshift camp at St. Michael's College in the eastern coastal town of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, on Thursday to receive food rations after their fishing village was destroyed by a tsunami.

Swedish child's father found

PHUKET, Thailand — A Swedish toddler was reunited with his father Wednesday, days after being found alone in the aftermath of the deadly tsunami that swept Asia.

Hannes Bergstrom was found after the waves subsided Sunday and taken to a hospital on this resort island for treatment. His photo was posted on the Internet on Monday.

The two-year-old's uncle saw the photo and

claimed the boy Tuesday. On Wednesday, the child was reunited with his father, Marko Karkkainen, at a hospital on the southern Thai island of Phuket, where both father and son were receiving treatment.

Hannes, his face scratched and pocked with mosquito bites, looked puzzled as his father choked up with emotion.

Despite the joy of seeing one another again, the day was tinged with sadness and anxiety. Suzanne Bergstrom, the boy's mother, is still among some 5,000 people missing in Thailand.

From The Associated Press

Powell vows to help tsunami victims in Asia

Bush pledges long-term aid

By ANNE GEARAN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Colin Powell, extending "sympathy and condolences" in a visit Thursday to the Embassy of Thailand, vowed that the Bush administration will follow through on commitments that it has made to help the victims of the Asian and African tsunamis.

"You can be sure that the president is determined to do what is necessary to deal with this challenge," he told reporters at the Thai embassy. "We're working very closely with the international community."

Powell was making a round of visits to the embassies of nations ravaged by the disaster as Rep. Henry J. Hyde, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, said that he was drafting legislation to assist victims and to help to introduce it early next year.

"The infrastructure of daily life is simply gone," said Hyde, R-Ill.

A congressional delegation headed by Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, a former U.S. foreign service officer, is scheduled to visit Thailand and Sri Lanka next week.

During his visit to the Thai embassy, Powell spoke anew of the death and destruction spawned by the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunamis. He told reporters that in the last 24 hours, a dozen planes from the U.S. Agency for International Development have landed or are en route to nations affected by the tsunami.

Powell also alluded to the



In the Wilmington area of Los Angeles, Operation USA warehouse coordinator Tony Shannon on Wednesday prepares a shipment of medical supplies that will be sent to tsunami-ravaged Sri Lanka.

roughly \$35 million in emergency aid already committed as "just a beginning."

"It's going to take a lot more," he said. "This is the time to make sure that we get a good needs assessment." The death toll there has reached more than 117,000.

On Wednesday, Andrew Natios, head of the development agency, told reporters: "Our efforts are focused, with the rest of the international community, on water and sanitation, because that is the greatest risk to people's lives."

Water and sewage systems were inundated by the enormous surge of water that hit coastal areas of 11 countries on Sunday following an earthquake deep in the Indian Ocean. Debris and corpses are also a health hazard.

President Bush assembled a four-nation coalition to organize humanitarian relief, and promised that the United States would help bankroll long-term rebuilding.

"It's just beyond our comprehension to think about how many lives have been lost," Bush said after emerging from a holiday vacation at his Texas ranch to make his first comments on the disaster.

Marc Grossman, undersecretary of state, will lead a U.S. task force to coordinate the American response and urge other nations to assist in relief efforts. He participated in a 40-minute conference call Wednesday night with senior Japanese, Australian and Indian officials.

State Department spokesman

Noel Clay said they agreed to try to avoid duplicating efforts, by each other and the United Nations, to help the victims.

From airlifts of rice and water purifiers to the deployment of Marine humanitarian assistance teams and warships, the United States marshaled resources across the globe to augment its initial \$35 million aid package and make sure the hardest hit locations got the short-term help they requested.

Bush said he phoned the leaders of stricken countries to solicit specific needs and assure them the initial aid package "is only the beginning of our help." He also laid the foundation for a long-term international recovery plan by forming the coalition with Japan, Australia and India and inviting other nations to join.

For a full list of U.S. aid agencies, visit www.stripes.com/relief.html

Accepting donations

The following aid agencies are accepting contributions for assistance that they or their affiliates are providing for those affected by the earthquake and tidal waves in Asia. U.S. organizations are members of InterAction, a coalition of relief, development and refugee assistance agencies. InterAction can be reached at 202-667-8227.

- Action Against Hunger
247 West 37th St.
New York, NY 10018 212-667-7800
www.actionagainsthunger.org
- AmeriCares
88 Hamilton Ave.
Stamford, CT 06902 800-486-4357
<http://www.americares.org>
- American Red Cross International Response Fund
PO Box 3724 Washington, DC 20013
800-HELP-NOW
<http://www.redcross.org>
- CARE
151 W. 10th St.
NE Atlanta, GA 30303-2440
1-800-891-2922 1-800-521-CARE
<http://www.care.org>
- Doctors Without Borders
1000 15th St.
Merrillville, VA 22116-8056
888-363-5292
<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>
- Habitat for Humanity International Asia Tsunami Relief Fund
1011 W. Hickory
Spring Lake, MI 49686-968-7490
<http://www.internationalaid.org>
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Geneva 19 Switzerland 41-22-730-4222
<http://www.ifrc.org>
- Operation USA
8320 Wilshire Avenue, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90049 800-676-6876
<http://www.opususa.org>
- Save the Children USA
54 Wilton Road
Westport, CT 06898 866-728-3843
<http://www.savethechildren.org>
- USO Salvation Army World Service Office South Asia Relief Fund
615 Station Road
Alexandria, VA 22313 800-SALV-ARMY

U.S. to aid Asia from Thai base

By MIKE CORDER
The Associated Press

BANGKOK, Thailand — A Thai air base that accommodated U.S. bomber planes during the Vietnam War is being used by the American military again as the hub of its tsunami relief effort in the Indian Ocean.

U.S. officials said Thursday that transport planes and personnel already are flying into and out of Utaapao, about 90 miles south of Bangkok.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said P-3 Orion surveillance planes were already flying search and rescue missions over Thailand and the first supply planes arrived in Thailand overnight.

The Pentagon has said C-130 cargo planes would haul relief supplies to Thailand from Yokota Air Base in Japan. They will also be used to ferry supplies, people and whatever's needed "from Utaapao to affected areas, the embassy spokesman said in a telephone interview.



BENNETT J. DAVIS III Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

Staff Sgt. Gilbert Deleon, right, of the 613th Security Forces Squadron, 613th Contingency Response Group from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, looks out over the Andersen flightline Tuesday while boarding a KC-135 headed for Utaapao, Thailand, with a 52-member team in support of the relief efforts in southern Asia.

In coming days, the crews could begin making airdrops of emergency water supplies.

"There's going to be planes and people zipping off all over the place," he said.

Utaapao is well known to pilots of the Vietnam War, when it served as a base for U.S. B-52 bombers.

A military forensic team also was due to arrive to help in the huge task of identifying the dead. Some 80,000 people are feared dead and millions are homeless in nearly a dozen countries after last week's devastating earthquake and tsunami.

The military also dispatched ships from an aircraft battle group to help with the relief effort. The USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group, which was in Hong Kong, was diverted to the Gulf of Thailand.

New Year's a time to honor victims

The Associated Press

SINGAPORE — New Year celebrations across Southeast Asia will be turned into remembrance services for those killed or affected by the quake and tsunami, with some events canceled outright.

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi ordered all government-level celebrations to be canceled and substituted with prayer ceremonies, urging the private sector to do likewise.

So far, organizers have scrapped New Year's Eve countdown parties and concerts typically held at landmarks such as the Petronas Twin Towers.

In Hong Kong, the Tourism Commission canceled fireworks displays scheduled for New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and Jan. 2 out of respect for the disaster victims.

Singapore's main arts center said its New Year's Eve performance would now be a remembrance service for the hundreds of thousands killed by the waves spawned by the magnitude 9.0 quake in the seabed off Sumatra's western coast.

A minute's silence will be held at midnight instead of the traditional raucous countdown in the final seconds of the year, and donations will be collected from the audience for Red Cross relief operations, the Esplanade-Theaters on the Bay said.

TO THE WORLD YOU MIGHT BE ONE PERSON,
BUT TO ONE PERSON YOU MIGHT BE THE WORLD

UNKNOWN



THANKS


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SIPC

OPINION

There's also power in how world responds

Chicago Tribune

A natural disaster on the staggering magnitude of the earthquake that struck beneath the Indian Ocean reminds us of our vulnerability, reminds us that the work of human beings, indeed our very existence, can be extinguished in an instant by the immense power of nature.

Humans build. Nature reclaims. It is a cycle as old as time: people enduring the crucibles of drought, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, fire.

Now the world watches in utter astonishment and horror at the destruction wrought on Sunday by the most powerful earthquake in decades and the resultant tsunami that exploded on the shores of several nations.

What began off the Indonesian island of Sumatra was felt thousands of miles away as water engulphed villages, tourist beaches and fishing boats across South and Southeast Asia. More than 76,000 people were killed, a number that is destined to grow as thousands of missing people are accounted for. Millions were left homeless in a ring of destruction from Indonesia to Somalia.

Earth's power could barely be comprehended as water traveled at speeds of up to 500 mph — akin to an aircraft hurtling in the sky — with people killed even thousands of miles from the quake's epicenter.

It was as if an earthquake hit Los Angeles and killed New Yorkers.

"The speed with which it all happened seemed like a scene from the Bible, a natural phenomenon unlike anything I had experienced," wrote The Washington Post's Michael Dobbs, who was among those caught up in the catastrophe.

Now, just as naturally as the earth shook, the people of the Earth will come to the aid of those who have been stricken. We come to accept that as an expected response to disaster. But revel in that for just a moment. For all its economic, political and philosophical tensions, this is still a world that responds to great tragedy with great and instant compassion.

The United States immediately committed \$15 million to relief efforts, the European Union pledged \$4 million with, no doubt, more to come as disaster assessments are made. United Nations relief specialists called for helicopters, medical supplies, tents and portable sanitation facilities. The United States dispatched military aircraft to the effort.

There will, inevitably, be talk about why this vast region did not have a system to warn of such impending devastation. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service operates tsunami warning centers in Hawaii and Alaska. According to news reports, if the Indian Ocean had the type of system that was started in 1965 in the Pacific, thousands of lives might have



What's left of the main bus stand in Galle, Sri Lanka, is shown Tuesday. It was destroyed by massive waves caused by Sunday's magnitude 9.0 earthquake off Indonesia's coast.

been saved if alerts of the impending disaster had been received and coastal areas had been quickly evacuated. There were hours between the time the earthquake was recorded and the walls of water rolled into the coastal areas.

Tsunami is a powerful word, a word often used in metaphors for great and uncontrollable forces in politics, sports and

other venues.

On Sunday, the world saw just how great and uncontrollable a tsunami is, not as a metaphor but as an event of nature. And in the days and weeks ahead we'll see another force, one perhaps more easily controlled, but powerful nonetheless: That's the force of human compassion, human drive, human will to rebuild.

New faces adopted old phrases in Campaign 2004

BY MARTIN SCHRAM

Scraps Howard

Looking back, 2004 was the sort of campaign year that could make you flip. Especially if you are a politician.

Take a close look at some key campaign slogans, arguments and policy fighting-mantras — then compare them with their roots. You will find that the rationalizations disbed by America's politicians and the political influencers have come full circle. Which may be one reason why liberals and conservatives sometimes looked ridiculous as they frantically chased their own tails.

Just look at where the candidates, spinners and influence-seekers wound up in their sloganeering on major issues of Campaign 2004 — and compare it with where those same arguments actually began.

Consider the emotional arguments about "states' rights." In 2004, "states' rights" was the rallying cry sounded mainly by liberals who were pushing their favorite solution for legal same-sex marriages.

Their rationalization was that the question of whether to legally permit marriage of gay or lesbian couples is the sort of civil right that should be left to the 50 states to decide for themselves.

Conservatives who were opposed to legalizing any homosexual marriages argued that this was a matter of national values that must be governed by one national policy that defines a marriage as only a union of male and female couples.

But in the 1950s and 1960s, cries of "states' rights" were played on the flip side. It was the conservatives who made "states' rights" their mantra, as they argued that it should be up to each state to decide whether to permit segregation of the races in public accommodations and schools. It was the liberals and moderates who championed the argument that civil rights was an inherent right that had to be imposed upon all states.

Consider now the battles over deficit

spending. Liberals rallied round the argument that the federal budget deficits are soaring, driving the national debt to record heights. And the Democratic team of John Kerry and John Edwards made it a staple of their stump speeches to argue that it is unconscionable for the federal government to bequest this vast debt to our children and grandchildren to repay.

Conservatives made the case that these deficits are not to be feared, but are just a manageable byproduct of tax-cutting policies that are America's key to prosperity.

But listen now to what the original conscience of the conservatives, the late Sen. Barry Goldwater, used to say about the deficit spending brought about by Democratic-controlled Congresses, especially President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" programs, championed by liberals. "With all the excuses Congress still manages to come up with in support of big spending, the nation is headed for financial disaster," the Arizona Republican wrote in "Goldwater," his autobiography. "It's a damn disgrace. The Con-

gress has now put Americans about \$2.5 trillion in hock. That's more than \$10,000 for every man, woman and child."

Consider next the wallings of liberals who decry the way Christian evangelical clymen such as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell have injected themselves into American politics in pursuit of their conservative fundamentalist agenda, which includes the campaign to ban all abortions.

But then recall the crucial leadership roles played by clymen such as Martin Luther King Jr., Andrew Young and, later, Jesse Jackson in forging the civil-rights movement that contributed so much to correcting wrong-headed laws that deprived so many Americans of their rights.

Consider the activist role of a number of Roman Catholic bishops in Campaign 2004, as they said they would not give communion to politicians who advocated policies the church opposed. There is evidence that their position may have had its desired effect.

President Bush received 46 percent of the Catholic vote in 2000 against the Protestant

Democrat Al Gore. But Bush did 2 percent-age points better in 2004, winning 48 percent of the Catholic vote against his Catholic opponent, Kerry. The Massachusetts senator said that, as a Catholic, he personally opposed abortion, but would not allow his religious views to affect his enforcement of U.S. laws and court decisions.

That was the position that U.S. Catholics overwhelmingly cheered — when it was first enunciated, not by Kerry, but by John F. Kennedy, in that historic speech in Houston before Protestant clergy on Sept. 12, 1960. He vowed that he would make decisions on issues including birth control "without regard to outside religious pressure or dictate. And no power or threat of punishment could cause me to decide otherwise."

That forthright pledge helped a Catholic Democrat from Massachusetts become America's first Catholic president. And on the flip side, that pledge may have helped prevent a second Catholic Democrat from Massachusetts from becoming president.

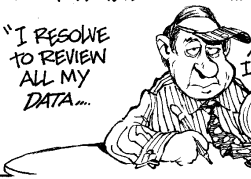
Martin Schram writes political analysis for Scripps Howard News Service.

Mallard Fillmore



The POLSTERS:

"I RESOLVE TO REVIEW ALL MY DATA..."



"CAUSE THERE'S NO WAY I COULD DO WORSE."

BY BRUCE TINSLEY

Airborne birth

AK KETCHIKAN — The term "airborne" took on a new meaning when a woman gave birth high above Southeast Alaska on a floatplane that was evacuating her after her labor began earlier than expected.

The baby girl was delivered safely to Jennifer Chinuhuk aboard a Pacific Airways floatplane. Isabelle Chinuhuk weighed in at 5 pounds, 9 ounces, and was 19½ inches long.

Jeff and husband Jamie Chinuhuk had not expected the birth of Isabelle until mid-January, but when Jennifer's labor began on Sunday, a medical evacuation was arranged and she was brought to the Metlakatla dock by ambulance.

Two doctors were on the flight, but Jamie Chinuhuk had to stay behind because there was not enough room on the plane.

Dennis pleads guilty

FL BOCA RATON — A defendant pleaded guilty to aggravated manslaughter in the death of his 3-year-old son, accidentally left in a parked vehicle in July.

Dennis Sierra, 43, entered the plea to avoid the anguish of a trial, his attorney said.

The judge sentenced Sierra to 10 years of probation and 500 hours of community service.

Sierra took his son Andres to work with him July 15 at his practice west of Boca Raton. He parked and went inside, forgetting that his son was in a car seat in the back, according to sheriff's officials.

Youthful diets

NH ROCHESTER — Now that the junk food is gone, officials will be monitoring middle school pupils' middles to see if they shed any extra pounds.

The Health and Nutrition Task Force formed last March to tackle obesity in schools will determine whether healthier snacks make a difference in reducing obesity, said its founder, Walter Hoerman, a pediatrician.

A student's aerobic capacity, body composition and muscle strength, endurance and flexibility will be measured in fitness grams. Activities such as running times, pull-ups, shoulder stretches and curl-ups are all part of the tests.

Students are compared not to each other, but to health fitness standards, established for each age and gender, according to the Cooper Institute, which developed the fitness gram.

Air passengers take bus

IA DES MOINES — Welcome and thank you for using Des Moines International Airport! Please have your boarding pass and ID ready as you approach the ... bus? A combination of two canceled flights and holiday travel snags forced United Airlines to bus passengers about 330 miles to Chicago to catch connecting flights.

Passengers said they were told the next United flight from Des Moines to Chicago with any extra room would be Thursday or Fri-



day, so United chartered two buses Monday and another Tuesday to send passengers on their way.

A United spokesman attributed the travel problems to snowstorms that socked the Northeast over the weekend and left the airline short-staffed across the country.

School district grows

ID MERIDIAN — Idaho's fastest-growing school district intends to ask taxpayers for \$80 million in bonding next year to cover growth in western Ada County. The district had planned for 400 new students to arrive in September, but 1,400 showed up.

Another 175 arrived between Sept. 1 and Nov. 1. The bonds would be used to build a new high school, a new middle school and up to four elementary schools.

Smuggling 'Santa'

OH CLEVELAND — The packages were labeled as toys for good girls and boys and the business was called Santa's Helpers. But authorities say the packages were nothing more than a naughty ruse to cover a large-scale drug smuggling operation.

The bogus business tried to smuggle \$7.8 million worth of cocaine from Los Angeles to nearby Willoughby, authorities said.

Drug agents seized about 175 pounds of cocaine in the largest

seizure in Cleveland this year. Four 55-gallon steel drums used as shipping containers raised suspicions. Billing information said the barrels contained toys, novelties and games.

Federal prosecutors charged Edward Boynton, 35, of Inglewood, Calif., with intent to possess cocaine. Boynton appeared in U.S. District Court.

Senator back in prison

NY NEW YORK — Former state Sen. Guy Velde returned to Riker's Island Prison. A state judge refused to issue an interim stay that would keep Velde free while the state's highest court decides whether to hear his appeal. The former Bronx lawmaker stepped down earlier this year, a week before he pleaded guilty to a charge in connection with an influence-peddling scheme.

Rating child care

AZ PHOENIX — A state board is developing a rating system for licensed child care centers to help parents determine the quality of the 2,000 centers in the state. The Arizona School Readiness Board would use criteria like teachers' education level, student-to-teacher ratios and curriculum. The governor has said a rating system should include financial incentives for centers.

Fighting invasive plants

WV HARPERS FERRY — Officials at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park are trying to rid the park of some unwanted guests: invasive plants that could crowd out native growth.

One of these invasive plants, known as Tree-of-Heaven, robs moisture from the soil and its canopy blocks out sun to other plants, according to park Superintendent Donald Campbell.

Campbell and other park employees are concerned about how the tree is affecting native trees such as dogwoods, oaks and maples.

The park, which is located at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, stretches across parts of West Virginia, Virginia and Maryland.

So far, no native species have been lost, even though many of the invasive species have been there since the land became part of the National Park System in 1944, according to Campbell. He believes the native species can be saved if park officials act immediately to save them.

Must disclose names

OH COLUMBUS — A pro-business group that spent \$4 million on a TV campaign to unseat a justice must disclose donors' names, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled.

The court dismissed the group's appeal, saying it did not involve any substantial constitutional question. The Ohio Elections Commission ordered the group in 2002 to list donors. It said the ads against Justice Alce Robie Resnick went beyond what "issue advocacy" groups are allowed to do.



Unusual pet

Melissa Packard walks with her daughter, Charlotte, 5, as Goldie,

an orphaned buck, gives chase in Hill Country Village, a suburb of San Antonio. Packard said the buck was left by his mom. "The family took in the deer, feeding and caring for it."



Playing in the park

Greg and Annie Moore of Kearney, Neb., play some basketball at

Pioneer Park. The couple brought their children and the dog to the park on a sunny afternoon.



Sky lines

A clear, winter sky is draped by jet trails above S&S Feed Mills in Shawnee, Okla.



Practice makes perfect

From left, Becky Christian, 11, and Sarah Rordan, 12, practice skating on the lagoon in Sacajawea Park in Livingston, Mont.



Watch your head

Market Studios North co-owner Daniel Brown peers out of the studio's second-floor window to take a look at the numerous icicles that have formed along the building in Troy, Ohio.



Fruitless effort

Nadine Correa, 8, reaches with a borrowed fishing pole in an effort to retrieve a kite stuck on a light pole in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Sweet trap

A squirrel attempts to shake its head loose from the top of an ice cream treat in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Shrimping extension

GA BRUNSWICK — Georgia's shrimping season has been extended indefinitely because of an abundant shrimp population. The season was to end at 5 a.m. New Year's Day before the state Department of Natural Resources extended it. Affected are commercial trawlers in Georgia territorial waters up to 3 miles offshore and recreational shrimpers using cast nets and beach seines.

Feather fight

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A battle is brewing over the rights of whites who practice American Indian religion to use federally restricted eagle feathers in ceremonies.

Two federal statutes — the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act — limit the right to have the feathers to members of federally recognized tribes. The feathers are the most powerful objects in the culture's ceremonies, and tribal members must earn the right to handle them.

Many tribal members, backed up by the federal government, say feathers and other eagle parts should be reserved for American Indians as a way of preserving the culture.

The federal laws make an exception for enrolled tribal members who practice an American Indian religion, allowing such members to get a permit to possess eagle feathers and parts.

She wants it all now

MA BOSTON — A 94-year-old woman who won a \$5.6 million dollar Megabucks lottery drawing in September wants to get the cash now instead of a 20-year annuity payout.

Louise Outing of Everett said she won't live to collect her full winnings, and she wants to be able to help her family and spend the money as she chooses.

On Tuesday, she asked Norfolk Superior Court Judge Barbara Dorch-Okara to order the state lottery commission to give her the full amount of her winnings, minus taxes.

But the lottery commission said Megabucks winners have never been paid lump-sum amounts. Executive Director Joseph Sullivan said only the multistate Mega Millions game offers a lump-sum option.

Careful what you drink

CA SALINAS — About 30,000 customers of California Water Service Co. were urged to boil tap water before drinking or cooking after power outages caused the water system's pressure to drop. The company said it won't know whether water quality was affected until tests are completed Wednesday. Customers will be reimbursed for bottled water purchases.

Driving doggie

AK SPRINGDALE — Michael Henson left the auto parts store with more problems than when he arrived. For that, he can thank his dog.

Henson, whose truck had been

experiencing a sticking throttle, left his dog in the truck when he went into the O'Reilly Auto Parts store in Springdale on Sunday.

"He'd left the truck running — I guess to show the people at O'Reilly's — and the dog jumped over and knocked the truck into gear," police Sgt. Billy Turnbough said.

The truck raced into the building, stunning Henson and clerk Josh Hopper.

No one was hurt and no citations were issued, police said.

High foreclosures rate

PA SUNBURY — Mortgage foreclosures in Northumberland County are approaching an all-time high, according to the Sheriff's Department. Maria Birster, the real estate officer, reports 191 sheriff's sales so far this year. She says that's up from 159 in 2003 and more than 187 mortgage foreclosures recorded in 2002.

Birster says all the foreclosures have been on homes.

Hand fishing test

MO COLUMBIA — Next summer, it will be legal to plunge into some Missouri rivers and grab catfish by hand — a type of fishing that is not for the faint of heart.

Known variously as noodling or hogging, handfishing has long been a misdemeanor punishable by fines, because state officials fear it depletes breeding-age catfish. It can also be dangerous: Noodlers hold their breath for long periods under water and sometimes come up with fistfuls of agitated snakes or snapping turtles instead of fish.

That does not discourage enthusiasts, who insist there is great sportsmanship in fishing with your bare hands.

So after years of urging by noodlers, and lopsided legislative support for easing up on handfishers, the Missouri Conservation Commission has approved an experimental handfishing season next summer. Forms of handfishing are already legal in 11 states, including neighboring Oklahoma, Arkansas and Illinois.

Florida Hall of Fame

FL TALLAHASSEE — Marion Hammer, a former president of the National Rifle Association, was named to the Florida Women's Hall of Fame by Gov. Jeb Bush. Also named were Shirley Coletti, considered a leader in the development of community-based treatment of mental health, and Judith Kersey, who has spent 36 years as a scientist and advocate for women in science.

Fighting school dropout

MA SPRINGFIELD — Mayor Charles Ryan appointed an 11-member youth commission to combat a rising high school dropout rate and a surge in violent crime. The panel is charged with improving academic and social opportunities for Springfield children. Springfield's dropout rate in 2003 was 8.5 percent, more than double the statewide rate of 3.3 percent.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



KEY: Sun, P, C, M, D, N, S, R, T, F, W, O, L, H. Cold front, Warm front, Trough, Occluded front, Stationary front, Low, High.

AFRICA

Cape Town	77/62	Mogadishu	89/76
Dakar	78/62	Nairobi	82/56
Freetown	88/73	Rabat	63/45
Khartoum	88/71	Tripoli	63/45

THE WORLD

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	45	35	Manila	86	72
Bahrain	70	52	Mexico City	71	43
Beijing	32	12	Montreal	24	29
Beirut	73	59	Riyadh	69	47
Bermuda	68	63	Rio de Jan	86	73
Caracas	89	72	Seoul	32	14
Helsinki	34	28	Sofia	38	26
Hong Kong	56	43	Sydney	80	67
Lisbon	59	45	Tokyo	52	36

TODAY'S STATE/STATE OUTLOOK

Alabama, Tex.	74	55	PC	Oklahoma	62	33	PC	Cleveland	62	33	PC
Alaska, Ohio	40	53	Rain	Oregon	62	33	PC	Colorado Springs	62	33	PC
Albany, N.Y.	46	36	Rain	Penn.	62	33	PC	Columbia, S.C.	62	33	PC
Albuquerque, N.M.	62	33	PC	R.I.	62	33	PC	Concord, N.H.	62	33	PC
Allentown, Pa.	53	37	PC	S.D.	62	33	PC	Columbus, Ohio	62	33	PC
Altoona, Pa.	62	33	PC	Tenn.	62	33	PC	Concord, N.C.	62	33	PC
Anchorage	18	3	PC	Texas	62	33	PC	Cornell, Ohio	62	33	PC
Ashfield	61	40	PC	Vt.	62	33	PC	Dallas-Ft. Worth	62	33	PC
Astoria, Ore.	62	33	PC	Wash.	62	33	PC	Daytona Beach	62	33	PC
Atlantic City	54	39	PC	W. Va.	62	33	PC	De Moines	62	33	PC
Austin	76	59	PC	Wis.	62	33	PC	Detroit	62	33	PC
Bakersfield, Calif.	62	33	PC	Wyoming	62	33	PC	El Paso	62	33	PC
Balt. Rouge	74	58	PC					Engle	62	33	PC
Baltimore	62	33	PC					Eugene	62	33	PC
Birmingham	68	53	PC					Evans	62	33	PC
Blomack	13	2	PC					Flag	62	33	PC
Boston	49	41	PC					Fort Smith	62	33	PC
Bridgport	49	41	PC					Franklin	62	33	PC
Brownsville	49	41	PC					Garfield	62	33	PC
Buffalo	52	35	Rain					Glenn	62	33	PC
Burlington, Vt.	46	36	PC					Hammond	62	33	PC
Carlsbad, Maine	34	29	Snow					Harvey	62	33	PC
Casper	62	33	PC					Fort Worth	62	33	PC
Chattanooga	62	33	PC					Fresno	62	33	PC
Charleston, S.C.	68	48	PC					Grand	62	33	PC
Charleston, W.Va.	68	48	PC					Grand Junction	62	33	PC
Chattanooga, Tenn.	64	46	PC					Grand Rapids	62	33	PC
Chattanooga, Tenn.	64	46	PC					Green Bay	62	33	PC
Cheyenne	47	23	PC					Green Bay, N.C.	62	33	PC

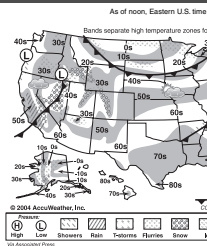
MIDEAST



MIDEAST

Amman	77/62	Mogadishu	89/76
Dakar	78/62	Nairobi	82/56
Freetown	88/73	Rabat	63/45
Khartoum	88/71	Tripoli	63/45

THE UNITED STATES TODAY



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelex: Cloudy with rain showers. High in the low 40s. Saturday lows in the mid to upper 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the low to mid 50s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to lower 40s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Partly cloudy with fog. High in the mid 50s. Saturday lows in the mid 20s.

France: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the low to mid 50s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to lower 40s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the mid 30s to upper 40s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s.

Southern Germany: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the mid 30s to lower 40s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s.

Hungary: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 50s. Saturday lows in the lower 30s.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 40s to low 50s. Saturday lows in the 30s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy with isolated thunderstorms along the southern coast. High in the upper 50s. Saturday lows in the mid to upper 30s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy. High in the mid 30s. Saturday lows in the upper 20s.

Norway: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Saturday lows in the upper teens to mid 30s along the coast.

Portugal, Spain: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to upper 40s.

Turkey: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to upper 40s.

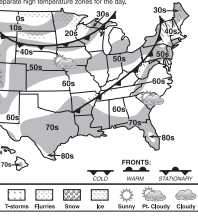
SUN & MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:07AM	7:07AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:24AM	8:24AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:06PM	5:07PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	4:33PM	4:34PM

New moon 10 Jan 05 First cry 12 Jan 05 Full moon 25 Jan 05 Last cry 2 Feb 05

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time

Ben's average high temperature zones for the day.



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High Low Showers Rain Tornadoes Blizzards Snow Ice Sunny P, C, M, D, N, S, R, T, F, W, O, L, H

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55252 Mainz-Kastel
Tel: 06134 567 800

...ITALY

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Tel: 0434 676 613/4

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Vicenza (VI) 36100
Tel: 0444 305 888

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Tel: 081 762 3868

SIGONELLA

c/o Hotel Sigonella Inn
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95040 Motta S. Anastasia (CT)
Tel: 095 713 0410

LA MADDALENA

Piazza Bambin Gesù 11
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IN THE STATES

Congress set to send tsunami aid

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When a new Congress convenes next week, lawmakers will call on the Bush administration to do all it can to help victims of the tsunamis in Asia and Africa. Questions of how much aid will be needed — and how to pay for it — will come later.

Lawmakers and congressional aides say the Bush administration should have enough funds available for immediate relief operations without having to request more right away.

But more money will likely be needed at some point to replenish emergency funds depleted by the disaster and to help pay for longer term relief and reconstruction.

The chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Rep. Henry Hyde, said Thursday he will introduce legislation to help victims of the tsunamis.

"The challenges of coping with suffering on this magnitude are almost unfathomable, and we will act," Hyde, R-Ill., said.

Some lawmakers say a request covering part of a package expected early next year for \$75 billion to \$100 billion.

A senior Democrat, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, said the ad-

ministration should seek new funds as part of the Iraq package instead of stripping money from existing foreign aid programs, such as those fighting childhood hunger and diseases.

Another option, Leahy said, would be using billions of unspent dollars intended for Iraq reconstruction. The administration has spent little of the \$18.4 billion in reconstruction funds approved by Congress last year, citing security problems and bureaucratic delays.

"That would be the quickest and easiest way because you votes and have to hurt the most devastated to help the most devastated," said Leahy, top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations foreign operations subcommittee, which oversees foreign aid.

Rep. Henry Hyde
R-Ill.

But Rep. Jim Kolbe, an Arizona Republican who chairs the House Appropriations foreign operations subcommittee, cautioned against shifting money from Iraq reconstruction. He said those funds were supposed to be spent over three years.

"It's not as though they haven't spent it because it's not needed," he said.

Hyde said it is possible — but not certain — that the administration could request relief funds as part of next year's Iraq spending bill.

A dry run for New York's big night



Times Square Alliance President Tim Tompkins tosses confetti out his office window in Times Square in New York on Wednesday during the annual "air whorliness test" of the confetti that will be used for the Times Square 2005 New Year's Eve celebration. The simulation is in preparation for the release by hand of 3,000 pounds of confetti from various buildings in Times Square at midnight EST on New Year's Eve.

Ark. judge denying gays foster rights unconstitutional

The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A state ban on placing foster children in any household with a gay member was struck down when a judge ruled that the state agency enforcing it overstepped its authority by trying to regulate "public morality."

Ruling in a case brought by the Arkansas chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, Pulaski County Circuit Judge Timothy Fox declared the ban unconstitutional Wednesday.

At issue was a 1999 board regulation that said gays cannot become foster parents, and foster children cannot be placed in any home with a gay person.

The ACLU had argued that the regulation violates the equal-protection rights of gays. But the judge's ruling did not turn on that argument.

Instead, Fox noted that the Arkansas Legislature gave the state Child Welfare Agency review board the power to "promote the health, safety and welfare

of children," but the ban does not accomplish that. Rather, he said the regulation seeks to regulate "public morality" — something the board was not given the authority to do. Rita Sklar, director of the Arkansas chapter of the ACLU, expressed satisfaction with the ruling.

"He made extensive findings of fact and he accepted everything we entered into the record refuting the state's reasons for the regulation, including these ridiculous claims that gay people are more likely to do drugs or have diseases," Sklar said.

Fox heard extensive testimony in the case over the past year. Several board members testified that they had personal problems with the idea of gays and lesbians engaging in sex.

Fox cited the testimony of sociologists and psychologists that gay people can be as loving and caring foster parents as heterosexuals, and that the children of gay adoptive parents can be as well-adjusted as those raised by heterosexual couples.

The flight that wouldn't end

300 passengers trapped aboard grounded airplane for 18 hours

The Associated Press

SEATTLE — A 10-hour flight from the Netherlands stretched into 28 as passengers diverted from Seattle-Tacoma International airport by fog sat the ground at a central Washington airport, stuck on the plane because of constant regulations.

Food and water ran short for the approximately 300 passengers aboard Northwest Airlines Flight 33, and the toilets stopped working as the hours dragged on. At least two passengers were treated for medical conditions because passengers were finally allowed to stretch their legs late in the evening.

"It's like we're hostages without being in any kind of hostage situation," passenger Misha Shmelyanov, a violinist with the Seattle Symphony, told The Seattle Times while on the plane Tuesday night.

The flight finally arrived at

Sea-Tac at 6:26 a.m. Wednesday, 18 hours after its scheduled 12:30 p.m. Tuesday arrival.

Heavy fog at Sea-Tac forced the crew of the DC-10-30 to circle the Seattle airport until fuel ran low and the plane had to be diverted across the Cascade Range to Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake. Since embarking on what was supposed to be a 10-hour nonstop flight from Amsterdam, passengers had already been on the plane for roughly 12 hours by the time it arrived at 2:20 p.m.

Passengers had to wait until another crew arrived from Northwest headquarters in Minnesota. The flight was delayed further after the plane carrying the crew suffered mechanical problems, airline spokeswoman Mary Stanik said. The crew finally arrived, but then the plane still wasn't allowed to leave because of bad weather in Moses Lake, Stanik said.

As passengers waited, food ran out and water had to be rationed. Pizza and soda were finally brought on board around 8:30 p.m., and the toilets also were eventually serviced.

Despite the Grant County airport's "international" moniker, passengers initially weren't allowed to leave the plane because the airport, a former Air Force base, isn't equipped to screen so many international travelers. They were finally allowed off the plane late in the evening, after airport officials temporarily cleared an airport terminal and posted sheriff's deputies at the entrances, effectively making it an international terminal.

Stanik said passengers would receive a gift pack that included phone cards and vouchers for a free airplane ticket anywhere Northwest flies in the United States and Canada.

"We apologized to our customers for any and all inconvenience," she said.

FBI exploring lasers directed at cockpits

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Authorities are investigating a mysterious laser beam that was directed into the cockpit of a commercial jet traveling at more than 8,500 feet.

The beam appeared Monday when the plane was about 15 miles from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, the FBI said.

"It was in there for several seconds like [the plane] was being tracked," FBI agent Robert Hawk said.

The pilot was able to land the plane, and air traffic controllers used radar to determine the laser came from a residential area in suburban Warrensville Heights.

Hawk said the laser had to have been fairly sophisticated to track a plane traveling at that altitude. Authorities had no other leads, and are investigating whether the incident was a

prank or if there was a more sinister motive.

In Colorado Springs, Colo., Monday night, two pilots reported green pulsating laser lights shined into their cockpits. Both the passenger plane and a cargo plane landed without problems.

Police dispatched patrol cars and a helicopter to a neighborhood to investigate but found nothing. FBI agents were continuing to conduct interviews, agency spokeswoman Monique Kelso said.

Federal officials have expressed concern about terrorists using laser beams, which can distract or temporarily blind a pilot.

The FAA mandates that laser light shows must register their locations and the lights cannot be directed above 3,000 feet.

Lasers are also often used by construction companies to line up foundations.

Interfering with a commercial flight is a felony punishable by up to five years in prison.

Horoscope

Though it's the last day of the year and therefore the last chance to celebrate 2004, the Virgo moon along with other planetary influences has us in an industrious mood. Squeezing as much production into the day as possible is a prerequisite for getting into the party mood tonight. The drinking is tempered, as health is a big New Year focus.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (December 31).

You're basically hot this year, looking forward to improved health and vitality. If becoming more fit is one of your New Year resolutions, you will find it easy to keep through January. This spring, emotional issues regarding home and family are resolved, freeing you up to take full advantage of a period of intense creativity beginning in August.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A war in your life pokes and prods at your psyche, inspiring you to re-think your plan for New Year's Eve. What? You still don't have a plan for the evening? At least have a plan to take on an enthusiastic attitude.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're feeling energized and can blow through an entire day's worth of duties in half the time. Why not cut out of a boring situation and spend some time primping for your New Year's celebration? You're gorgeous in green.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your plucky wit doesn't make sense to everyone — just the most important people. You'll meet someone over food or drinks. Plant yourself by the snack table, and get chatting. By midnight, you've found someone to kiss.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The most romantic nights are in, not out. Forgo the parties — and drunk drivers — in favor of snuggling in front of the TV with your sweetie. Single? Host friends or family at your place.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Any socializing you do tonight is likely to have a strong work component. If

you're not actually going to a job-related event, you may meet someone in your field or exchange business cards with an interesting stranger.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). New Year's bash at your house? The cosmos is working in your favor — expect to pull it off without a hitch. The place is immaculate, the food divine. Just remember to stop running around long enough to have fun!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Go ahead and indulge your senses. A smorgasbord of gastronomic delights awaits you. You can start your diet tomorrow. Better yet, for your best chance at success, wait until after the new moon on Jan. 11.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Let them just try to stop you from painting the town red tonight! You've worked your tail off this year, and nobody knows it better than you. Go ahead — let loose. A night of unrepentant celebration is certainly well deserved.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Let them just try to stop you from painting the town red tonight! You've worked your tail off this year, and nobody knows it better than you. Go ahead — let loose. A night of unrepentant celebration is certainly well deserved.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Life is looking pretty darn good from where you're standing. Your social life rocks, and you've got folks at the office wrapped around your little finger. Now, if only you could find the perfect outfit for tonight.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Let someone else be the designated driver. If there's a checkpoint within a 10-mile radius of you, you're likely to be pulled over. And indicators suggest a butting of heads with authority figures — yikes! Better safe than sorry.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You feel as if you're working at cross-purposes with an important woman in your life. In fact, you're not, but it's challenging to see the forest for the trees. This lesson is one you'll be happy you learned before the new year rings in.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



success, wait until after the new moon on Jan. 11.

Calvin and Hobbes



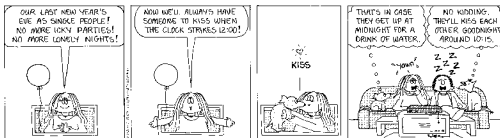
Jump Start



Zits



Kathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



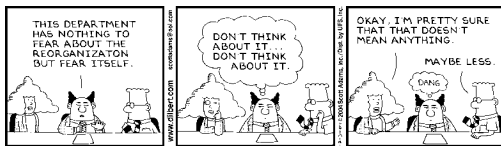
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



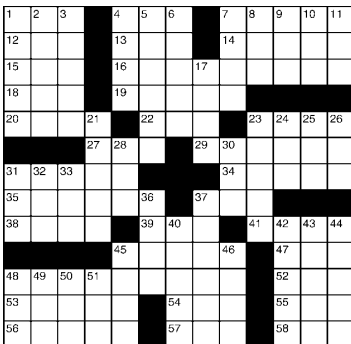
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Fall behind
- 4 "Encore!"
- 7 Foolish
- 12 The whole enchilada
- 13 Cleo's slayer
- 14 Wipe out
- 15 Slapstick missile
- 16 Intimate
- 18 "The — Daba Honeymoon"
- 19 Seraglio
- 20 Pizzazz
- 22 Fresh
- 23 Not naked
- 27 Young fellow
- 29 Deli order
- 31 "Forever —"
- 34 "Fame" singer
- 35 Livelihood
- 37 Beast of burden
- 38 "Hee Haa" humor
- 39 Grier or Tillis
- 41 Physical
- 45 Odometer tally
- 47 "Less Than Perfect" star
- 48 Reason to say "Whee!"
- 52 Oklahoma city
- 53 Whoopi's "The Color Purple" role
- 54 Carnival venue
- 55 Feminine side
- 56 Medical device
- 57 Chart
- 58 Pigeon

Down

- 1 Bolivian city
- 2 Out, of, sorts?
- 3 Accumulate
- 4 Baroque composer
- 5 "Survivor" setting
- 6 Fern seed
- 7 Consider
- 8 Annoy
- 9 Zero-star review
- 10 Omega precursor
- 11 On the other hand
- 17 Wilds a needle
- 21 With 23-Down, Cruella's portrayer
- 23 See 21-Down
- 24 Legislation
- 25 Chances chum
- 26 Conk out
- 28 Circle segment
- 30 Six-pack, maybe
- 31 Jennings' employer
- 32 Cattle call
- 33 It sticks to you
- 36 Grand-scale tale
- 37 Aviatrux's forename
- 40 Frighten
- 42 They provide inside information
- 43 Taxpayer's dread
- 44 Labor leader George
- 45 Bump into
- 46 Feed the hogs
- 48 IV meas.
- 49 Rent
- 50 Flammenco cheer
- 51 Sermon subject

Answer to Previous Puzzle



12-31

CRYPTOQUIP

F E M D V U Y N K O I D Q Z
 E O V K G K O I Q M X I J D J M G
 E M D Z B Y Q M G M D Z I " G M Z
 F D J M E K B Z I O J Q M X
 U G Y Z M . . .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT DO YOU CALL FOUR UNLUCKY FELLOWS WHO HAPPEN UPON QUICKSAND? QUATTRO SINKO!

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals P

Horoscope

Happy New Year! Sagittarian influences have us looking into the future as if it is a land to be conquered, an adventure to be commandeered, an impossibility to be made real. Industrious vibes prevail, so roll up your sleeves and get started before criticism and self-doubt have a chance to settle in. This isn't the time to ask how. Just figure it out.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(January 1). You are the New Year's baby who brings optimism and a fresh start to all who dearly need it! You'll reap the rewards of your own generosity by late February. A pet project is embraced by the one who can take it to the next level. Personal satisfaction is so full, you'll want to share with more people. Libra and Pisces are wonderful partners.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

Last night's misunderstanding could leave you with a tension hangover. You must quickly clear last year's bad-vibe pollution. Forgive others, forgive yourself, and quickly move forward.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

There are many interpretations for the information you're getting now — don't automatically assume the worst. You're not good enough just as you are, no matter what your third-grade teacher said. Be kind to that scared kid inside.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

Emotions can create mental cacophony that gets in the way of communication, causing you to misinterpret what you hear. If you need an impartial translator, turn to a Taurus or Libra friend.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

There is plenty of excitement surrounding you, but for once, you feel grounded and secure. Steadfast Saturn supports you in your efforts to achieve something momentous this year. Review your goals, and start planning now.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

Celebrate the new year with your family. If geographical boundaries keep you

apart, pick up the phone and call. Yes, they may drive you crazy, but they know you better than anyone and will always support you with their love.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

Instead of being your own worst critic, why not reverse that energy in the new year and become your own biggest fan? There is nothing you cannot accomplish if you stay positive and hopeful.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

Be aware of all that is beautiful and joyous in the world, and refuse to succumb to negativity. If your old methods of dealing with others are not working, find an open window through which love can enter your life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

With each new year, you shed your old skin and rise up, polished and new. Change is second nature to you. Be aware, however, that some unfinished business has yet to be resolved before you can progress.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

"Is certainly not forgot" — in fact, you'll probably be lunching with him or her today. Share your resolutions, and enlist help in keeping them. Your friend will steer you from potential pitfalls.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

Maybe your action looks foolish to those who like to play it safe, but if you don't test the boundaries of what you're really capable of, you'll never know! The results will surprise you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

If you're already in a committed relationship, this is a prime time to focus on your future together. Discuss goals, and review finances. If you're not committed, you could meet a kindred spirit while running a mundane errand.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

Face it — your candle is burnt at both ends! Start the new year by getting plenty of rest. Keep your schedule fairly open and flexible. An unexpected opportunity comes in the form of a Gemini.

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Holiday Mathis



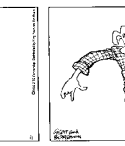
Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



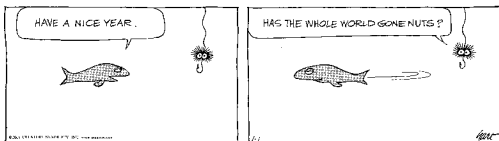
Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



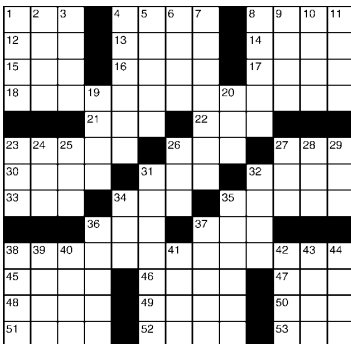
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Support system?
- 2 Opulent retreat
- 8 Lose intentionally
- 12 Predetermine
- 13 Addict
- 14 Below
- 15 Expert
- 16 Latvia's capital
- 17 Con
- 18 "Joy to the World" band
- 21 West of Hollywood
- 22 George Burns role
- 23 Sea World attraction
- 26 Prepare to drag
- 27 Possessive pronoun
- 30 Uncumbered
- 31 Massachusetts cape
- 32 Left
- 33 Wapiti
- 34 Michael Jackson album
- 35 Hardly graceful
- 36 Director's call
- 37 New York newspaper
- 38 Hit song of 1983
- 45 Stead
- 46 Palette selections
- 47 Whatever amount
- 48 Exam format
- 49 Ontario neighbor
- 50 Try the tea
- 51 Fringe benefit

Down

- 1 Baby sitter's woe
- 2 Opulent supply
- 3 Antiquing apparatus
- 4 Dresser
- 5 Remark to the crowd
- 6 Toy block name
- 7 Seemed endless
- 8 Three-strand interweave
- 9 Time-consuming
- 10 Pledge
- 11 Legal document
- 19 Tube trophy
- 20 Election Day abbr.
- 23 "I tried to warn you"
- 24 Actor Holbrook
- 25 Send out questionnaires
- 26 Scepter
- 27 Chop
- 28 Cartoonist's
- 29 Unkempt home
- 31 Ball player
- 32 Desire
- 34 Bargain
- 35 Tailoring insert
- 36 Make leakproof
- 37 He played
- 38 Bueller's teacher
- 39 Rubbish
- 39 Drain the energy from
- 40 Stern
- 41 Emanation
- 42 Tabula —
- 43 Computer operating system
- 44 Category

Answer to Previous Puzzle



I-1 CRYPTOQUIP

Q F A X Q U Q U - L Q R W K
A W U K O N Q U I O Q H F A I W N
P U Q H G A U K L W G W I O W G E

Q R K U N X K W U E Q U T A P T I.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE AMBIGUOUS AND HUMOROUS NEWSPAPER HEADLINE READS "RED TAPE HOLDS UP NEW BRIDGE."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals R

Starting the New Year positively

Dear Abby: Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the column you printed last New Year's. My mother is always cutting out articles for me. The majority end up in the trash. But that one is taped to my bathroom wall. I read it every day on my way out. If I'm having a bad day, I think about it. Please print it again for me and others.

Mme is a little tattered.

—Heather in Florida
Dear Heather: With pleasure.

Dear Readers: Rise and shine, and welcome to 2005! This is our chance for a new beginning, the day we discard destructive old habits for healthy new ones. With that in mind, I'm printing Dear Abby's oft-requested list of New Year's resolutions — adapted by my mother from the original credo of Al-Anon.



Dear Abby

JUST FOR TODAY, I will live through this day only. I will not brood about yesterday or obsess about tomorrow. I will not set far-reaching goals or try to overcome all my problems at once. I know that I can do something for 24 hours that would overwhelm me if I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be happy. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. If my mind fills with clouds, I will chase them away and fill it with sunshine.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will accept what is. I will face reality. I will correct those things I can correct and accept those I cannot.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will improve my mind. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

I will not be a mental laborer.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will

make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I will be kind and courteous to those who cross my path, and I'll not speak ill of others. I'll improve my appearance, speak softly, and not interrupt when someone else is talking. Just for today, I'll refrain from improving anybody but myself.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will do something positive to improve my health. If I'm a smoker, I'll quit. If I'm overweight, I'll eat healthily — only if just for today.

And not only that, I'll get off the couch and take a brisk walk, even if it's only around the block.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will gather the courage to do what is right and take responsibility for my own actions.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DYLLA

FARCS

CADILP

BLOHD

www.jumble.com

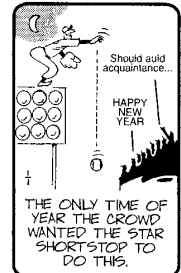
Answer:

Yesterday's Jumbles: REARM MERGE MULISH CAMPUS

Answer: The forecaster described the heat wave as — A SUMMER SIMMER

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

THE " " (Answers Monday)

A holiday poem to lighten the mood

Dear Readers:

Happy New Year! A faithful reader sent us this poem, and we hope it will amuse you. We don't know the author, but we enjoyed the sentiment:

The Week After Christmas
Was Twas the week after Christmas,
and all through the house
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.

The cookies I'd nibbled,
the eggnog I'd taste

At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.

When I got on the scales, there arose such a number!

When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),

I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared;

The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared.

I wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese

And the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."

As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt

And prepared once again to do battle with dirt, I said to myself,

Annie's Mailbox



as I only can
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So — away with the last of the sour cream dip.

Get rid of the fruit-cake, every cracker and chip.

Every last bit of food that I like must be banished.

'Til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie — not even a lick!

I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.

I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie.

I'll munch on a carrot and quyetly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore —

But isn't that what January is for?

Unable to giggle, no longer a riot

Happy New Year to all, and to all a good diet!

Dear Annie: I am a disabled

woman and the blessed owner/handler of a Service Dog. Brandy goes everywhere with me, and many people ask questions. I usually don't mind answering, but I have some suggestions for your readers. Be polite.

Please ask me if it's OK before attempting to speak to or pet the dog. If I tell you "no," please accept it graciously. My dog is working. While Brandy is trained to ignore you, even a moment's inattention on the dog's part can cause me injury. Please give us the room we need to safely negotiate stairs, elevators, aisles, etc. Do not feed the dog.

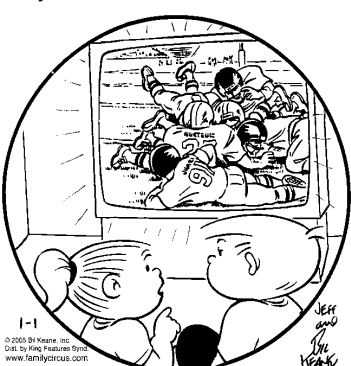
For many of us, our dogs have given us back some measure of normalcy and independence. Things are hard enough without being stared at, whispered about, pointed at and interrogated.

— D.F. and Brandy in New Jersey
Dear D.F. and Brandy: Readers, take note.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sauer, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

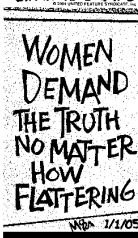
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Family Circus



"Did I hear him right? He said that guy coughed up the football!"

GRAFFITI



Domis the Menace

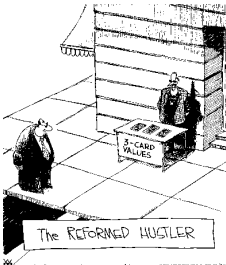


The Far Side



The kugger lasted well into the night, and on the following morning Dale thrust his foot into a nest of cranky, hung over, stimulus-response scorpions.

Non Sequitur



The REFORMED HUGGLER

SCOREBOARD, FROM PAGE 23

Hockey

World Junior Championship

Team	GP	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pts
Russia	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
USA	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
Canada	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
Czech Republic	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
Slovakia	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
Switzerland	3	2	0	1	13	4	6
Belarus	3	1	0	3	9	22	2

x-Canada to championship, Sunday, Dec. 26

Canada 3, Slovakia 2

USA 3, Russia 2

at Thier River Falls, Minn.

Czech Republic 7, Belarus 2

Finland 4, Germany 3

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Switzerland 5, Belarus 3

at Thier River Falls, Minn.

Sweden 6, Switzerland 4

Monday, Dec. 27

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Canada 8, Sweden 1

Switzerland 4, Slovakia 2

at Thier River Falls, Minn.

Slovakia 2, Finland 0

Tuesday, Dec. 28

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Canada 5, Switzerland 2

at Thier River Falls, Minn.

Finland 5, Sweden 4

Slovakia 5, Czech Republic 3

Thursday, Dec. 30

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Canada 5, Finland 3

at Thier River Falls, Minn.

Sweden 5, Switzerland 2

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Group A fourth-place vs. Group B fifth-place

Quarterfinal 1

Group A runner-up vs. Group B third-place

Quarterfinal 2

Group B runner-up vs. Group A third-place

Group A fifth-place vs. Group B fourth-place

Group B fourth-place vs. Group A fifth-place

Seminfinals

Group B winner vs. Quarterfinal 1 winner

Group A winner vs. Quarterfinal 2 winner

Sunday, Dec. 29

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Group A fifth place vs. Group B fifth place

Group B fourth place vs. Group A fourth place

Fifth Place

Quarterfinal loss

Tuesday, Jan. 4

at Grand Forks, N.D.

Third Place

Seminfinal loss

Championship

Seminfinal winners

College basketball

AP Men's Top 25 fared

Wednesday

Northwestern 12-21 did not play. Next: vs. Northwestern Saturday

Kansas 8-9 did not play. Next: No. 9 Georgia Tech Saturday

Oklahoma State 9-11 did not play. Next: at Kansas-Atkins Saturday

North Carolina 10-1 did not play. Next: at Wake Forest 10-21 did not play. Next: vs. Clemson Sunday

Wake Forest 10-21 did not play. Next: vs. Syracuse 12-1 did not play. Next: vs. Holy Cross 12-2

Kentucky 11-1 did not play. Campbell 8-20. Next: vs. South Carolina 12-2

Georgia Tech 9-11 did not play. Next: at No. 10 Kansas Saturday

Pittsburgh 10-11 beat South Carolina 74-66. Next: vs. Wake Forest 10-21

Georgia Tech 9-11 did not play. Next: vs. Oklahoma Thursday

Connecticut 11-1 did not play. Next: at Michigan 10-21

Washington 10-11 did not play. Next: vs. Arizona 9-21 did not play. Next: vs. Saint Louis, Friday

Texas 10-21 beat Texas-San Antonio 100-82. Next: vs. UNLV Saturday

North Carolina 10-11 beat Wisconsin 76-62. Next: vs. North Carolina 10-11

North Carolina 10-11 did not play. Next: vs. Texas 10-21

Georgia Tech 9-11 beat Virginia 76-62. Next: vs. New Orleans Saturday

Alabama 10-11 beat Virginia 76-62. Next: vs. Eastern Kentucky Thursday

Georgia Tech 9-11 beat Virginia 76-62. Next: vs. Eastern Kentucky Thursday

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Wednesday's men's scores

Assumption 68, St. Thomas Aquinas 59

Bentley 68, Francis Marion 59

Boston College 67, Kent State 55

Bryant 78, LIU Tech 39

Clark U. 65, McDaniel 39

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Owensboro & Casino Classic

First Round

Hartford 68, Rider 57

Wes-Green Bay 72, Dakota St. 66

Wes-Green Bay 72, Dakota St. 66

Wes-Green Bay 72, Dakota St. 66

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2004: The year sports went to the extremes

2004, FROM BACK PAGE

"Roger just played too good today," Andy Roddick said after losing to Federer in the Wimbledon final. "I threw the kitchen sink at him, but he went to the bathroom and got a tub."

Singh and Federer weren't huge shocks to rise to the top of their sports after their strong play in the past, but to win on the scale they did was extraordinary.

There was far less surprise in seeing Lance Armstrong pedal to a record sixth straight Tour de France. Michael Schumacher won a seventh Formula One title or Kurt Busch capture NASCAR's Nextel Cup in a new championship format.

Not, despite their advanced age, was there astonishment in seeing Roger Clemens win a record seventh Cy Young award or Barry Bonds join Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron in the 700-homer club while winning a record seventh MVP Award.

Clemens retired from the Yankees, unretired in a hurry for his hometown Houston Astros, and had one of his finest seasons. Bonds shrugged off a federal grand jury appearance, a thousand questions about steroids and the arrest of his personal trainer in the BALCO case, and, at 40, had a career year by anyone's standards.

They, like Ichiro Suzuki, whose record 262 hits broke George Sisler's 84-year-old mark, gave the season a golden hue.

Michael Phelps imposed himself in such a way at the Athens Olympics, winning eight medals, six of them gold and none a surprise. If Phelps didn't quite match Mark Spitz's record haul of seven individual golds in 1972, he still ruled the pool as no other man since then.

Mororocu's Hicham El Guerrouj, the world's greatest middle-distance runner, elevated the Games by winning the 1,500 gold after failing twice before, then added the 5,000 — a double that hadn't been accomplished since Paavo Nurmi did it in 1924.

Argentina pulled the upset of the Games, winning the gold in men's basketball while a humiliated U.S. team, booed in Greece and lambasted at home, settled for bronze.

It was a year to take pleasure in the overachievement of little Saint Joseph's, No. 1 in the men's basketball poll, and to cheer for Smartey Jones, the Seabiscuit of our times. Smartey Jones won millions of fans in his bid for the Triple Crown, and they loved him still even when he came up a length short in the Belmont.

Witnessing Peyton Manning eclipse Dan Marino's season TD passing mark — 48 in 1984 — has been a wonder to watch, especially seeing him doing it with poise and class and none of the phony contrived plays that some players have deployed to grab attention.

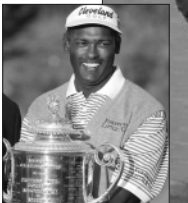
"I thought 48 was something no one would touch or get close to," Marino said.

We needed all those good times to get us past the embarrassments, scandals and violence that permeated the sports landscape.

Images of the year: The good, the bad and the ugly

Switzerland's Roger Federer, right, won three Grand Slam tennis events and Fiji's Vijay Singh, below, won 10 golf tournaments, including the PGA Championship.

AP photos



Indiana Pacers' Ron Artest, right, triggered a brawl in the stands at Detroit last month that was as frightening as anything seen in sports. NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman, below, is presiding over a lockout that is threatening to erase an entire season.

AP photos



While BALCO founder Victor Conte, above, fought off accusations of distributing steroids to elite athletes, Barry Bonds, right, joined the 700 home run club.

AP photos

Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" in the Super Bowl halftime show, exposing her right breast to an audience of 90 million, brought a wave of condemnation, but more serious matters blew through the seasons.

After 15 years of denials, Pete Rose admitted to betting on baseball and his own Cincinnati Reds, but he remained banned from the

game and ineligible for the place that would otherwise surely be his in the Hall of Fame.

There were the allegations of rapes and sexual favors for football recruits at the University of Colorado, which made far more of a splash when they came out than when they were dismissed as unfounded.

There was the sexual assault



Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning, above, broke Dan Marino's 20-year-old record for touchdown passes in a season. Manning has 49 entering the regular-season finale on Sunday.

AP



case against Kobe Bryant that was nightly news until the prosecution dropped the charges when his accuser said she did not want to participate in the trial. The 26-year-old Los Angeles Lakers star has said the sex was consensual, but the woman is pursuing damages in a civil case.

Meanwhile, nothing has slowed down Bryant on the court, not

even his feud and split with Shaquille O'Neal, the departure of coach Phil Jackson, and a Lakers lineup that is a shadow of what it once was.

Hockey wasn't even a shadow. The NHL was shut down, possibly for the 2004-05 season and beyond, when team owners locked out the players to press their demands for a salary cap.

The BALCO investigation, which began the summer before last, goes on still, with recent allegations by the company's founder that he was secretly juicing up the world's fastest couple, Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery, among others in the Olympics, baseball and the NFL.

"It's embarrassing to baseball," one player, Jeff Kent, said of the continuing steroid saga.

For all the sensationalist headlines and federal grand jury leaks, baseball attendance stayed high, except in Montreal, which lost the Expos to Washington, D.C., the first team to move since the Senators became the Texas Rangers in 1971.

The Athens Olympics were also unfazed even as steroids touched the Games from the start, when the top two Greek runners, Kostas Kenteris and Katerina Thanou, faked a motorcycle accident to avoid drug testers. Two dozen athletes got busted for drugs — more than twice the number at Sydney four years earlier — yet that was hailed as a success.

"These were the Games where it became increasingly difficult to cheat and where clean athletes were better protected," IOC chief Jacques Rogge said during the closing ceremony.

They were also the Games that saw Mia Hamm, perhaps the most influential woman in sports since Billie Jean King, retire after leading the U.S. women's soccer team to a gold medal. And they were the Games that saw American Paul Hamm win gymnastics gold when the judges miscalculated the score of a South Korean rival.

Agreeing on a winner continued to elude college football, which once again had a split national championship when Southern California won a trophy and LSU another. And more argument loomed as the year ended, with three teams from major conferences — Southern Cal, Oklahoma and Auburn — undefeated going into the holiday bowl games.

There were more player-fan confrontations in sports, from baseball to basketball, none uglier than the Malice in the Palace between several Indiana Pacers and fans of the Detroit Pistons.

Ron Artest, the first player in that brawl to charge into the stands after a drink was thrown at him, had wanted time off to promote his CD. Now he has the rest of the season off.

Artest became the symbol of some of what is wrong in professional sports. He did not win much money, too many untamed egos, too much alcohol. Still, sports are society's escape and a reflection of its values. They have the power to raise aspirations, change lives and cut us down to size, and they did all that this year perhaps more than ever before.



Lance Armstrong was voted The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year for the third straight time after winning his sixth Tour de France.

Armstrong caps 'special year' with third AP award

BY JIM VERTUO
The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Even by his lofty standards, Lance Armstrong's return to the mountain-top in 2004 was pretty special.

The question now facing Armstrong is whether he'll return to challenge the Pyrenees and the French Alps again in 2005.

Already recognized as one of the truly inspiring athletes of his generation, Armstrong took his cycling legacy a step further when he won a record-breaking sixth consecutive Tour de France in July.

And for his accomplishment, he was honored Monday as The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year for the third straight year.

Armstrong joined Michael Jordan (1991-93) as the only athletes selected by sports writers and broadcasters three straight times since the honor was first awarded in 1931.

"For me it was a special year," Armstrong said. "It's always nice to win the Tour, but this year was special simply because I broke the record and made history."

Armstrong received 51 first-place votes and 312 total points.

Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning was second with 17 first-place votes and 156 points.

The voting reflected Armstrong's return to dominating form in an event where he separated himself so far from the pack there was little question of the outcome.

In 2003, Armstrong struggled to win his fifth Tour de France, capturing the cycling's premier event and one of the world's most grueling sporting events by a mere 61 seconds.

It was also the year he got dived, and he acknowledged that he struggled to balance the pressures of his personal and professional lives.

Yet the 33-year-old Texan stormed back in 2004 with arguably his best U.S. Postal Service team and his best individual performance on the bike. He won five individual stages and a sixth with a team time trial in France.

"I certainly feel like I recovered my true strengths. I haven't felt as in control of a Tour as this year," Armstrong said.

While other top riders and rivals such as Tyler Hamilton and Jan Ullrich withered during the punishing race, Armstrong powered on.

But as dominant as Armstrong was in France, he has yet to commit to going for a seventh time next year. He promises to race again in the Tour de France before he retires, but won't say if it will be next year or 2006.

Armstrong says he's ready to pursue other challenges in racing.

He has dedicated most of his cycling life to the Tour, leaving little room for such classic races as the Spanish Vuelta, the Paris-Roubaix or Fleche Wallone, which he won in 1996 shortly before being diagnosed with testicular cancer.

But he also knows that it's the Tour de France his American fans want to see him win.

"I could win the Tour of Flanders and I wouldn't win AP Athlete of the Year," he said.

Armstrong and his team — which has a new sponsor with the Discovery Channel — will release their schedule in January. Armstrong won't say if he'll race the Tour de France until May.

Whatever his choice, it will be all or nothing. It won't be a case of him riding to help someone else on his team win.

"If I'm going to ride, I'm riding to win. I'm not going to suffer for the weeks not to win," he said. "I've gotten too used to standing on the Champs Elysees at the end."

Consistent performance merits another AP honor for Sorenstam

BY JIM LITKE

The Associated Press

She won early and often, and often by overwhelming margins. She won on four continents — in Australia, Sweden and Japan and in six of the 50 United States. She won a major, the most money and a remarkable 10 times in just 20 starts worldwide.

Small wonder then, that what was an average year for golfer Annika Sorenstam was more than good enough to earn her recognition as The Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year for the second year running.

Sorenstam received 40 first-place votes and 263 total points.

Diana Taurasi, who led Connecticut to the NCAA women's basketball title and then captured the WNBA's Rookie of the Year award, finished second. She had 15 first-place votes and 154 points, two more than Russian teen sensation Maria Sharapova.

Consistency has been the hallmark of Sorenstam's 11-year career in pro golf. Her performance this season wasn't nearly as eventful as 2003, when she won two majors and 11 times on the LPGA Tour, became the first woman since 1945 to play on the PGA Tour, did a star turn on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and entered the Hall of Fame. But incredibly, it was every bit as efficient.

Sorenstam began it with a win in the ANZ Ladies Masters on Australia's Gold Coast, making up a four-stroke deficit at the midway point by closing with a pair of scintillating 65s. She ended it by edging Cristie Kerr in a playoff in the ADT Championship, the final tournament on the LPGA calendar, with her only victory that didn't come by multiple shots.

In between, Sorenstam wrote a book, lifted her profile as an endorser and mixed it up with the boys a second time in the Skins Game. She also stayed comfortably atop the world rankings, locked up a fourth consecutive LPGA money title — her seventh in the last 10 years — tied her scoring average record of 68.7 and led the tour in top-10 finishes, rounds under par and greens in regulation.

"Naturally, I'm pleased with my season in many different ways," Sorenstam said, "especially because I've played less tournaments and still won so much."

Most important, perhaps, the 34-year-old Swede proved again that she has to be included in any argument about the most dominant golfer — male or female — of this era. Over the last four seasons, Sorenstam has separated herself from her competition even more than either Tiger Woods or Vijay Singh, boasting her total LPGA wins to 56 and climbing within striking distance of the record 88 recorded by



Annika Sorenstam won 10 times in just 20 starts worldwide this year, earning her second straight Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year award.

Kathy Whitworth in a 22-year career.

"I'm still so far away from it but I've come so far ahead of what I ever thought I would," Sorenstam said earlier this year. "I always said I would continue to play this game while I enjoy it and feel motivated. I just wonder if I can continue on this pace."

But no one should be surprised if she does.

Golfing great Nancy Lopez saw something special in Sorenstam not long after she joined the pro circuit. "There's a calmness about her you don't normally see in young players," Lopez said at the time, and that's still evident watching Sorenstam play now, riding purposefully down the fairway in wraparound sunglasses.

But then, as now, the cool, confident exterior masks a competitive desire that burns every bit as brightly as it has in any of the game's greats.

Soon after Australian Karrie Webb knocked Sorenstam off the throne of women's golf at the end of the 2000 season, the Swede rededicated herself to the sport with an intensity few believed she possessed. Sorenstam spent the next six weeks practicing nothing but putting and began a strength-training regimen that has made her the envy of not just her peers, but female athletes of every stripe.

After a 2002 season that ranked as the most successful by any golfer in four decades, the same impulse drove her to accept a sponsor's invitation to play against the men at the Colonial the following year. Sorenstam missed the cut there, but played in front of crowds nearly four times larger than she routinely encounters on the LPGA Tour. She put her game and her personality under that microscope to learn more about her weaknesses than strengths, and those lessons have been paying dividends ever since.

In this year's ADT Championship, Sorenstam missed a 12-foot birdie putt on the final hole of regulation to win the tournament outright, then had to cobble together a bogey on the first extra hole for the victory. She didn't win any style points, but the display of grit was as good a way as any to wrap up another spectacular season.

"You're a champion whether you make a bogey or a birdie," Sorenstam said.

"That's the way I look at it."

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Conquest: Sox go from doldrums to delirium

CONQUEST, FROM BACK PAGE

"I just want to get some kids up here!" activities coordinator Lisa Scherber shouted as the patients, too young to understand, watched their parents pose for pictures with the prize. "We've got a lot of adults."

The World Series trophy has been a much-welcomed and well-traveled guest this offseason. And how it got to be that way is the sports story of the year, according to a vote by the newspaper and broadcast members of The Associated Press.

Boston's first World Series title since 1918 and the unprecedented comeback against the Yankees that made it possible was a run-away winner with 108 first-place votes and 1,325 points.

Lance Armstrong's sixth straight Tour de France title



The New York Yankees won the offseason bidding war for superstar shortstop Alex Rodriguez, above, who was the focal point of a midseason brawl at Fenway Park. But the Red Sox ultimately prevailed by eliminating the Yankees in a historic comeback in the AL championship series.

(seven first-place votes, 785 points) finished second and the Indiana Pacers-Detroit Pistons brawl was third (six first-place votes, 662 points).

The New England Patriots' Super Bowl victory and 21-game winning streak was next (zero first-place votes, 498 points), followed by sports' steroid stories (eight first-place votes, 495 points).

Merely winning the Series after an 86-year drought probably would have been enough to make the Red Sox the year's top story.

But the way they did it was one for the ages.

After falling five outs short of the World Series last year and firing their manager because of it, the Red Sox acquired Curt Schilling, the top starting pitcher on the market, and Keith Foulke, the top reliever.

Their pursuit of Alex Rodriguez — a deal that would have involved unloading Nomar Garciaparra and Manny Ramirez — ended late in 2003. But before spring training got started the reigning AL MVP went to the hated Yankees — thanks in part to the ground-work the Red Sox had done.

It seemed like Boston would be New York's runner-up once again. The Red Sox played .500 ball for most of the year, promoting general manager Theo Epstein to trade Garciaparra for shortstop Orlando Cabrera and spare parts Dave Roberts and Doug Mientkiewicz.

But the regular season was, as expected, merely the undercard for a Red Sox Yankees playoff rematch; for the seventh consecutive year, Boston finished second to New York in the AL East.



Boston Red Sox catcher Jason Varitek celebrates the team's first World Series championship since 1918 with pitcher Keith Foulke (29).

"It's had a huge impact on people. It's made them feel good."

Bill Mullaly

Red Sox security guard who escorts the World Series trophy

Schilling's right ankle in place so it wouldn't flop around when he pitched.

With blood soaking through his sock, Schilling beat the Yankees and forced a seventh game. But the only pitcher the Red Sox had left was Derek Lowe, who pitched so poorly in the regular season that he was bumped from the playoff rotation.

Lowe pitched six innings of one-hit ball, Ortiz homered and Johnny Damon hit a grand slam to help Boston open a 10-3 lead — too big even for the Red Sox to blow.

They were going to the World Series.

Their NL opponent was a familiar one: The St. Louis Cardinals had beaten Boston in the 1946 Series and again in '67, both times in seven games. Red Sox fans wondered whether the Series would be a letdown after the emotional victory over the Yankees, and they were right.

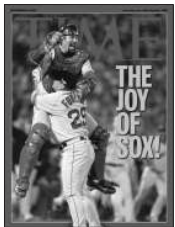
The Cardinals failed to put up a fight this time and the Red Sox would soon be celebrating a sweep in Busch Stadium. Millions turned out for the victory parade as it drove through Boston and into the Charles River on amphibious vehicles.

Those who couldn't see the trophy at the "rolling rally" might still get their chance. The Red Sox promise to bring it to every one of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts that asks.

If it makes it that long. Already, two of the flags on the trophy have come loose and need to be fixed. But the Red Sox can't bring themselves to take it out of commission that long.

"Just about everywhere I go, people get very emotional. These people have been waiting a lot longer than I have," said Bill Mullaly, a 30-year-old Red Sox security guard who escorts the trophy on many of its visits.

"It's had a huge impact on people. It's made them feel good."



Boston's improbable triumph this fall got plenty of attention outside the sports world.

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Badgers smother No. 18 Tide, extend streak

The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin's Alando Tucker missed last year's game against Alabama because of a foot injury.

He made up for it Wednesday night. Tucker had 21 points and seven rebounds for the Badgers as they stifled No. 18 Alabama's high-powered offense in a 65-62 victory Wednesday night that extended the nation's longest home winning streak to 36 games.

The game was the Big Ten's best defense — Wisconsin giving up just 56 points a game — against the Southeastern Conference's best offense — Alabama averaging better than 86 points.

The Crimson Tide (10-2) couldn't recover from a first half that saw the Badgers (9-2) take a 33-23 lead.

Alabama scored on seven straight possessions to open the second half and cut the lead to 42-37, but Wisconsin built its lead back to double figures and then held the Crimson Tide scoreless for almost 3 minutes after Ronald Steele's basket had made it 54-46 with 6:18 left.

Tucker's three-pointer gave the Badgers a 65-48 lead, their biggest of the game, and Wisconsin cruised from there.

Tucker was one of four Badgers to finish in double figures. Mike Wilkinson hit his first three shots to start the game as Wisconsin never trailed and finished with 15 points. Zach Morley had 13 points and seven rebounds, while Sharif Chambliss scored 11 points.

"If they're trying to key on any one person, we're just going to find the open guy and take good shots," Wilkinson said. "I think that's a big advantage. We have a bunch of guys that can knock down shots when we need it instead of just one or two go-to guys."

Alabama came in shooting almost 50 percent from the field, but the Crimson Tide made less than one-third of their shots in



Alabama's Chuck Davis is trapped by Wisconsin's Mike Wilkinson, left, and Brian Butch during the first half Wednesday in Madison, Wis. Wisconsin defeated Alabama 76-62.

the first half.

Coach Mark Gottfried said Wisconsin frustrated his Crimson Tide and didn't allow them to march up and down the court like they've been accustomed. Alabama didn't score a point on a fast break.

"All of a sudden, it's a different tempo for us and we didn't handle that very well and got impatient and had a really poor first half," Gottfried said.

Chuck Davis typified Alabama's night of offense. He made two of his first eight shots, turned it around to score 10 points in the Crimson Tide's run to open the second half and then cooled off the rest of the way. He finished with 18 points and seven rebounds, while Kennedy Winston also had 18 points for the Crimson Tide.

"You're not going to get easy baskets. You're not going to be able to get yourself rolling by getting layups," Davis said. "You're just going to have to make shots, and tonight was not a night in which we

made our shots."

The Badgers haven't lost at Kohl Center since Dec. 4, 2002, when Wake Forest beat them 90-80.

No. 8 Kentucky 82, Campbell 50 At Lexington, Ky., freshman center Randolph Morris had a career-high 25 points on 11-for-14 shooting and coach Tubby Smith won his 20th game at Kentucky.

Kelenna Azubuike made 14 points for the Wildcats (9-1), who won their fifth straight game.

Anthony Atkinson had 14 points for the Fighting Camels (2-7), who have lost 39 of their last 40 road games.

Smith is 200-53 in eight seasons at Kentucky and 324-115 in 14 seasons overall with the Wildcats, Georgia and Tulsa. He is the fourth coach to win at least 200 games at Kentucky, joining Adolph Rupp, Gene B. Hall and Rick Pitino.

No. 10 Pittsburgh 72, South Carolina

68: Chevon Troutman scored 20 points, including the go-ahead basket with 2:37 remaining, to keep the Panthers unbeaten.

Carl Krauser had six free throws in the final minute for Pittsburgh (10-0), which won its 48th straight non-conference home game.

Carlos Powell and Josh Gonner each scored 15 points for the Gamecocks (7-3), who were 2-of-11 from three-point range.

No. 15 Texas 100, Texas-San Antonio 82: At Austin, Texas, P.J. Tucker scored 19 of his 21 points in the second half and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead the Longhorns.

The Longhorns (9-2) fell behind 70-66 midway through the second half on David President's layup. But Tucker then scored six points in an 11-1 run that gave Texas the lead for good. The Longhorns then went on a 14-4 run to put the game away.

The Longhorns tied the school record with 13 blocked shots led by Jason Klotz's seven. Texas outscored UTSA 34-29. Justin Harbert led Texas-San Antonio (4-5) with 25 points. He was 10-for-12 from the field, including 5-for-7 on three-pointers, and almost single-handedly kept UTSA within reach.

West Virginia 71, No. 20 George Washington 65: At Morgantown, W.Va., Mike George scored 19 points and D'or Fischer added 14 as the Mountaineers improved to 9-0 for the first time in 44 years.

T.J. Thompson and J.R. Pinnock each had 14 points for the Colonials (8-2), who had their eighth-game winning streak snapped and were held below 70 points for the first time this season.

No. 23 Michigan St. 92, N.C.-Asheville 63: Paul Davis and Kelvin Torbert led a balanced offense with 15 points each for the host Spartans (9-2), who shot 67 percent from the field and led by as many as 37 points in their only game in a 15-day span.

Omar Collington and Steven Rush each had 14 points for the Bulldogs (3-7), who committed 21 turnovers, 13 on Michigan State steals.

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U.S. loses first Juniors game in two years

The Associated Press

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — The United States was unable to rally from a four-goal deficit and lost 5-3 to Belarus in pool play of the International Ice Hockey Federation World Junior Hockey Championship on Wednesday night, the Americans' first loss in the tournament in two years.

The defending champion U.S. team had won eight straight games in the tournament, with its last loss coming against Finland in the bronze medal game two years ago.

"I thought they played a great game," U.S. coach Scott Sandelin said of Belarus. "They took advantage of our mistakes. I thought we had a lot of turnovers tonight."

Belarus had lost its last three games and had been outscored 19-4.

In other games on Wednesday, the Czech Republic beat Switzerland 5-2, Finland rallied to defeat Sweden 5-4, and Slovakia defeated Germany 5-0.

The loss dropped the United States to 2-1 in the group that in-

cludes Russia (2-1), the Czech Republic (2-1) Switzerland (1-2) and Belarus (1-3). The Americans finish pool play against the Czechs on Thursday.

Phelps sentenced to probation
SALISBURY, Md. — Olympic swimming champion Michael Phelps was sentenced to 18 months' probation Wednesday after pleading guilty to drunken driving.

Judge Lloyd O. Whitehead granted Phelps probation before judgment, meaning his record will be expunged if he follows the terms of probation. Phelps pleaded guilty to driving while impaired, and prosecutors dropped charges of driving under the influence, underage drinking and failure to stop at a stop sign.

"I recognize the seriousness of this mistake," Phelps told the judge in a packed courtroom. "I've learned from this mistake and will continue learning from this mistake for the rest of my life."

The 19-year-old Phelps was fined \$250, must attend a meeting sponsored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and must give speeches at three schools by June

1, advising them about making choices and warning them about the dangers of alcohol.

Pacers O'Neal back in court

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Indiana forward Jermaine O'Neal will go before a federal judge on Thursday to see if he can continue playing for the Pacers. If the ruling goes against him, and O'Neal returns to the suspended list, he said he'll accept it.

"I got to," O'Neal said Wednesday. "It will be hard. I'll be disappointed, but I'll put it in God's hands. I've got a lot of faith."

Originally suspended by NBA commissioner David Stern for 25 games for fighting with fans during the Nov. 19 Pacers-Pistons brawl, an arbitrator ruled last week, allowing O'Neal to play.

Both sides will be back in court Thursday in New York, where Judge George B. Daniels will consider the Pacers' ruling suit and whether O'Neal will have to serve the remaining 10 games of his suspension.

Buckeyes blow out Cowboys in Alamo Bowl

By T.A. BADGER
The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Justin Zwirk hardly looked like a quarterback who had been on the bench for more than two months.

Zwirk replaced suspended starter Troy Smith and threw for 189 yards and a touchdown in his first action for Ohio State since Oct. 16, and Ted Ginn Jr. and Lyndell Ross each scored Wednesday night as the 24th-ranked Buckeyes defeated Oklahoma State 33-7 to win the Alamo Bowl.

"Justin did an excellent job and did what was asked of him," Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said. "I told someone that Justin was playing as best as he's ever played."

Zwirk, who lost the starting job to fellow sophomore Smith after the sixth game of the regular season, completed 17 of 27 passes despite a mild hamstring pull.

"If any of you have played with a pulled hamstring, well, it's pretty painful," Tressel said. "Justin did an excellent job."

Zwirk, who rode a stationary bicycle on the sideline so his hamstring didn't tighten, wasn't about to pass on the chance to end the season on a positive note.

"You've got to go back in," he said. "I just did what I had to."

The Buckeyes went 3 under Zwirk before he injured a shoulder in a loss to Iowa. Smith stepped in and led Ohio State (8-4) to victories in four of its last five regular-season games.

But Smith was suspended for the Alamo Bowl by the team last week after university officials said he accepted an unspecified gift from a team booster — a violation of NCAA rules.

Tressel declined to talk about what's next for the football program, which has been marred this season by a series of arrests



Ohio State freshman Ted Ginn (7) had 78 yards receiving, 40 rushing and one touchdown to lead Ohio State's 33-7 victory on Wednesday.

and allegations by former star player Maurice Clarett that players routinely took cash gifts from boosters.

"I'm happy for the team and excited for the future," Tressel said.

Ginn, a freshman with dazzling speed, caught six passes for 78 yards and rushed for 40 yards and a touchdown. Ross scored 97 yards on 12 carries, and Mike Nugent kicked four field goals to become Ohio State's career scoring leader.

Ohio State took advantage of two early turnovers, then stifled the Cowboys (7-5).

Oklahoma State quarterback Donovan Woods completed 15 of 34 passes for 137 yards and rushed for 80 yards. Verman Morency, who entered the game eighth in Division I-A rushing with 1,474 yards, was limited to 24 yards on eight carries.

On the first series, Woods underthrew receiver Chijuan Mack and the pass was picked off by linebacker Bobby Carpenter. Three plays later, Zwirk hit a diving Anthony Gonzalez with a 23-yard touchdown pass.

After a 37-yard field goal by Nugent, the Cowboys were driving when Woods lost his grip on the ball near midfield while trying to run up the middle. Defensive lineman Joel Penton recovered and Nugent capped the drive with a 35-yard field goal to give Ohio State a 13-0 lead with nearly six minutes to go in the first quarter.

"We could not move the foot-

ball or protect our passer effectively," Cowboys coach Les Miles said. "It was difficult for [Woods] to throw."

In the second, with the Buckeyes at midfield, Zwirk threw a screen pass to Ginn on the left side and the Cowboys cornered him for what looked like a modest gain.

But Ginn eluded three defenders and broke back to the right sideline for a 42-yard pickup to Oklahoma State's 9. Ross capped the 78-yard drive by scoring from the 1 and making it 20-0.

"I try to make something out of nothing if I get trapped," Ginn said. "You've always got to keep your feet moving. You're always moving forward — that's what we've been taught."

When Nugent made the extra point following Ross' touchdown, he passed Pete Johnson as the Buckeyes' career scoring leader with 356 points.

Oklahoma State got into Ohio State territory for the first time on their final series of the first half, but the drive ended with Jason Ricks missing a 42-yard field-goal attempt.

Early in the third, Cowboys safety Jamie Thompson recovered a fumble by backup Brandon Joe at the Ohio State 34. A 17-yard run by Prentiss Elliott moved the ball to the 9, but the Buckeyes defense stiffened.

On fourth and long, Oklahoma State tried a run off a fake field goal, but the play was stopped 6 yards short of the end zone.

Utah QB Smith might pass up senior season

By DOUG ALDEN
The Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Utah quarterback Alex Smith knows his prospects as an NFL draft pick can't get much better — even if he returns for his final collegiate season.

He was a Heisman Trophy finalist, the first in Utah history, and led the Utes to an 11-0 regular-season record and a Fiesta Bowl berth. He has also completed two-thirds of his passes while throwing for 28 touchdowns and just four interceptions.

Smith received his undergraduate degree last spring, so sticking around for a senior year might not make much sense. He plans to decide in a couple of weeks.

"Can I improve myself that much? Can I get better over the year? Can I help my stock? That's kind of what this is going to come down to," Smith said Wednesday. "Would it be better for me to leave now? Those are the things that are going to have to get weighed."

It will be very difficult for Smith to top this season, although the same could have been said a year ago when he won 11 after taking over as the starter.

This season, Smith has completed 185 of 280 passes for 2,624 yards and will cap this season Saturday in the Fiesta Bowl against Pittsburgh. And as the leader of a spread offense that got Utah into the Bowl Championship Series game, Smith has reluctantly been the headliner of the "BCS Busters," as the Utes have proudly been calling themselves this month.

Smith actually laughed off speculation early this fall that this could be his final college season,



Utah junior Alex Smith ranks second in Division I-A in passer rating (174.9) and third in yards per attempt (9.37) this season.

but now it doesn't seem so outrageous.

About the only thing going against Smith is his weight. At 6 feet 4, he's happy when he weighs 210 pounds. As much as he eats and lifts, that's about as heavy as he's been able to get, despite two years of trying to bulk up from the 180 pounds he weighed as a freshman.

"I look at the improvement I made over this last offseason and just imagine if I can make that same gain where I would be," Smith said. "Gathering information this last month has kind of been crazy as well. Who knows?"

Smith petitioned the NFL to find his projected draft position, but hasn't received a response yet.

If he's projected as a high pick, he will likely enter the draft and leave the Utes in the hands of Joe Johnson, a freshman who has played little as backup this season.

Klatt rallies Colorado past UTEP

By JOEL ANDERSON
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Joel Klatt threw for 333 yards and two touchdowns and Mason Crosby kicked four field goals, leading Colorado to a 31-23 victory over Texas-El Paso in the Houston Bowl on Wednesday night.

Klatt keyed a fourth-quarter comeback by the plodding Buffaloes (8-5), who tried to keep pace with UTEP, which finished eighth in the nation in scoring offense. Colorado led 3-0 midway through the first quarter and trailed until seizing the lead late in the game.

Facing fourth and 3 at its own 35, Colorado scored a bit of trickery. Punter John Torp raced 22

yards around the left end on a fake punt for the first down. Two plays later, Klatt threw a 39-yard touchdown pass to a wide-open Evan Judge for the go-ahead score with 8:43 left.

Klatt was flattened by UTEP defensive end Ibo Bok as he released the ball and didn't realize what happened until teammates helped him off the turf.

"I couldn't tell you happened," Klatt said. "The linemen told me [about the score] when they picked me up."

Klatt completed 24 of 33 passes, five to Joel Klopfenstein for 134 yards. Bobby Purify rushed 89 yards for two touchdowns.

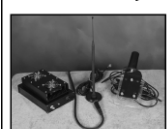
Colorado's first bowl victory since the 1999 Insight.com Bowl capped an improbable turn-

around for the Buffaloes, who went through a season of scandal and turmoil.

Gary Barnett's program was the target of sexual assault claims dating to 1997, followed by an investigation that discovered sex, alcohol and drugs were used as recruiting tools, although there was no evidence that university officials sanctioned it. Then, Barnett was put through three months of administrative leave for making insensitive remarks about two accusers, including a former kicker who said she was raped by a teammate in 2000.

Jordan Palmer, the younger brother of former Heisman winner Carson Palmer of Southern Cal, completed his first eight passes for 120 yards as UTEP (8-4) raced out to an early 14-3 lead.

Ibis Tek GSM Cell Phone Jammer Model 735TC Vehicle System



Designed specifically with the intent to prevent the operation of cellular telephones from being used as remote detonators for explosive devices. Since GSM does not use paired offset transmit and receive channels like the standard frequency jammer are less than 60 percent efficient in preventing a signal from getting through. This unit uses a different waveform to sweep both up and down in frequency in a single cycle and the waveform is repeated several thousand times a second. Additionally the white noise is used to modulate the output waveform with an additional pseudorandom tone that changes frequency 16 times a second and is also swept through the entire bandwidth at several thousand times per second to give the Buzzsaw modulation that is used in high end military jamming systems.

Features: Disrupts all GSM cellular frequencies 800-900 MHz and 1800-2100 MHz. Mounts on back of front passenger or driver seat. 100 Meter operational range and connects directly to IEM/EAR batteries under seat. In 12V vehicle adapter in other vehicles. Washable suction mount antenna for non-metallic vehicles and magnetic mount antenna for metallic vehicles. SQU's Operates continuously when connected to vehicle battery power and will not disrupt operation of military radar and communication devices. Internal Power systems are all switching supplies with near 90% efficiency to insure a constant power output at the battery voltage varies. Does not rely on very high battery discharge.

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SPORTS

2004: Trials, tribulations and triumph

From Sox to scandal, this year was extraordinary

BY STEVE WILSTEIN
The Associated Press

Sure shots, long shots and once-in-a-lifetime shots — 2004 had them all.

It was an over-the-top, out-of-control year, sensational in both its glorious and scandalous senses.

Halley's Comet comes around every 76 years. The Boston Red Sox hadn't won the World Series in 86 years.

Nobody ever won a World Series or even a league championship down 0-3 in games, much less three outs from a sweep.

A gutsy bettor with blind faith in the Red Sox could have made millions plunking down dough on them at that particularly bleak moment when a sweep by their ancient and annual enemy, the New York Yankees, seemed inevitable.

It took a self-proclaimed team of "idiots," undaunted by history or curses, to flip fate around and make 2004 one of the greatest vintage years of sports.

There is no more enduring image of the year — what it took to win and what it meant to those who did — than the bloodstained sock of Curt Schilling. It gave new meaning to Red Sox and belongs in the Hall of Fame.

Stitched to pitch, Schilling inspired his teammates and lifted the suffering generations of Red Sox Nation scattered around the globe. It was a medical miracle, if not a heavenly one, the very opposite of what Boston's many pessimistic fans had come to expect.

The signs at Fenway read "Believe," and millions did, even if they feared down to the last out that something, somehow would go wrong as it always had since 1918.

Yet Schilling delivered and David Ortiz, Manny Ramirez, Jason Varitek, Johnny Damon, Kevin Millar, Orlando Cabrera and the others did the rest, stunning the Yankees and sweeping the St. Louis Cardinals in the

most amazing team comeback in sports.

"All empires fall sooner or later," Red Sox President Larry Lucchino said after the Yankees became the first baseball team to lose a seven-game series after leading 3-0.

"1918 is gone forever," Boston outfielder Trot Nixon said when the Series ended. "We're not going to have to hear about that again."

He was wrong, though in a good way. These Red Sox will hear forever how they broke the so-called Curse of the Bambino.

Roll back the calendar to Jan. 1 and imagine betting on the New England Patriots to win the Super Bowl en route to an

NFL-record 21-game winning streak and the Boston Red Sox to sweep the World Series in the same year. What would you have won if you parlayed those with bets on the starless Detroit Pistons to win the NBA title and the Sunshine State's Tampa Bay Lightning to win the Stanley Cup?

What if, along the way, you ran up the winnings by betting that one school would win the men's and women's Final Four in basketball. No school ever had. Connecticut did.

And what were the odds back then that Vijay Singh would win nine times in the year, become golf's first \$10 million man, and replace Tiger Woods as No. 1 in the world?

Or that Switzerland's Roger Federer, uncoached, would become the first man since 1988 to win three Grand Slam tennis titles?

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Curt Schilling's bleeding ankle was etched into baseball lore when Boston's ace won two playoff games, including Game 6 of the ALCS, after eschewing season-ending ankle surgery.

Boston's conquest is one for the ages

BY JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

There was no Commissioner's Trophy the last time Boston Red Sox won the World Series.

No commissioner, in fact. So when the Red Sox won it all for the first time since 1918, they didn't think it would be right to stick their trophy on a shelf somewhere to gather dust.

Instead, they took it to every state in New England, to a fan hangout in California and the team's academy in the Dominican Republic, to Christmas tree lightings and churches and nursing homes, where octogenarians have waited all their lives to see their favorite team win just once.

At the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where they treat sick children thanks in part to the Red Sox and the Jimmy Fund, the trophy caused such a hubbub when pitcher Tim Lincecum brought it by last week that order, finally, had to be restored.

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- Patriots win streak 48
- Steroid scandal (8) 45
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- Philas wins 8 medals — 6 gold in Athens (3) 36
- Pistons upset Lakers for NBA title (1) 342
- Singh is golf's first \$10 million man 321
- Clemens wins 7th Cy Young (1) 280
- Bryant's sexual assault charge dropped 278
- NHL lockout 213
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- Suzuki sets record with 262 hits (1) 176
- U.S. Olympic women's teams get gold 156
- USC/US split national title in football 123
- Bush wins Nestlé Cup (1) 120
- Buemi wins gymnastics gold 114
- Federer wins 3 Grand Slam titles 87
- UConn wins men's and women's NCAA basketball titles 54

First-place votes in parentheses



AP photos

Deion Branch (83) and the New England Patriots celebrated a 21-game winning streak and the team's second Super Bowl victory in three seasons. Lance Armstrong (right), selected as The Associated Press' male athlete of the year for the third consecutive year, became the only six-time winner of the Tour de France in July.

Wisconsin stuffs Alabama's high-octane offense, extends home winning streak to 36

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LeBron injured in Cavs' loss to Rockets

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Ohio State gets a respite from a season of turmoil by blowing out Oklahoma State in the Alamo Bowl

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